

THE
MISCHIEFS,
And Danger of the
SIN OF
IGNORANCE,

OR,
IGNORANCE ARRAIGNED,
With the Causes, Kinds,
and Cure thereof.

As also,
The Excellency, Profit, and Benefit
of Heavenly KNOWLEDGE.

Largely set forth from *Hos. 4. 6.*
My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.

By *W. Geering*, Minister of the
Word at *Lymington*, in the County
of *Southampton*.

London, Printed for *Luke Fawn*, and are to be
sold at his Shop at the Sign of the Parrot
in *St. Pauls Church-yard*, 1659.

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1578/4867.



TO THE
Right Worshipfull
JOHN BUTTON
of Buckland,

JOHN BULKELEY
of Burgatt,

AND
JOHN HILDESLEY
of Hinton,

In the County of Southampton,
Esquires.

Right Worshipful,

M Arcus Antonius de Do-
minis confesseth in that
little book, wherein he
expresseth the reason of his de-
parture

M. An-
tonius de
Dom.
Archiep.
Spalat.

The Epistle

parture from the Church of Rome, That the closing up of the Scriptures from the people, thereby labouring to hold all in ignorance, gave him occasion to suspect their Religion, and to fear his estate, and to think on conversion, freely professing three in these termes, *Scripturæ summa apud nos ignorantio*, that there is nothing whereof the Papists are more ignorant, then of the Scriptures. And other Nations heretofore have cast this as a reproach upon the *English* Nation, That the Nobility and Gentry thereof were ignorant and unlearned; which aspersions hath been well wiped off, since the beginning of the Reigne of Queen *Elizabeth*: but I wish
it

Dedictory.

it were not a just reproach, that did yet stick upon the body of our Common people, that they are lamentably ignorant and unlearned in matters of the highest concernment; what gross darknesse is yet among us, notwithstanding all the meanes vouchsafed to us from the Father of lights? and may not the Lord complain of us, as sometimes he did of the people of Israel, *they are a Nation void of Counsell, neither is there any understanding in them?* Divers of the Ancients have given us their testimony concerning the great diligence that was used in all sorts of people in their times, in searching the Scriptures, desiring nothing else

Deut.
32. 28.

The Epistle

August. but to attain to the mind of
de doct. him that wrote them , and so
Christi- to the will of God contained
an. lib. 2. in them. And what was more
cap. 5. common to the Fathers , then
to exhort the people to get
them Bibles , to read them, and
to examine what they heard
by them? and how sharply did
they reprove the negligence
of those that did it not? *Theo-*
doret, writing of his times, saith,
You shall every where see those
points of our faith to be known
and understood , not only by such
as are Teachers in the Church,
but even of all kind of Artifi-
cers, and not men only , but wo-
men also , not they onely which
are book-learned , but they also
that get their living with their
needle,

Dedicatory.

needle ; yea maid-servants , and waiting-women , and not Citizens only , but Husband-men of the Countrey are very skilful in these things : yea, you may hear among us , Ditchers , and Neat-herds , and Wood-setters , discoursing of the Trinity , and the Creation , &c. Origen from his childhood learnt the Scriptures, and gat them without book, and propounded many questions to his Father *Leonides* a godly Martyr , (who rejoyced much in it) about the difficult senses thereof. So *Macrina*, *Basil's* Nurse , taught him the Scriptures of a child , and *Hierome* writeth of the Lady *Paula*, that she could say the Scriptures by heart , and that she set many

Euseb.
lib. 6.
cap. 3.

Basil.
Epist. 74.

The Epistle

of her maids to learn them; and many of his writings are directed to women, commending their industry in searching the Scriptures, and exciting them thereunto, as to *Paula* before mentioned, *Eustochium*, *Salvina*, *Celantia*, &c. The diligence of those times may justly reprove the great negligence of these times: we have had the light of the Gospel clearly shining among us these hundred yeares, we have had many excellent Teachers to unfold the mind of God out of his word to us, and yet very few there be that are annointed with eye salve, to see that which is called the secret of the Gospel, and to understand that great mystery of godliness, which

Dedictory.

which God hath revealed in his word : we have had the way of God (like *Apollos*) expounded to us more perfectly then our fore-fathers; and yet the Lord may say to us, as sometime Christ to his Disciples; *Are ye yet without understanding?* Mat. 15.
16, 17.
Perceive ye not yet? Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known me, &c. Joh. 14. 9.

There be certain impediments of knowledge, Some naturall, as infancy, incapacity, unlearnednesse, the one of these is not suddenly, the other not easily cured: Some are sinfull, as Pride, Ignorance, and Aversenesse, for which cause the Lord hath not onely given us the Scriptures, but also the Ministry

The Epistle

Ministry of his Pastours, and
other meanes to remove these
impediments : let an igno-
rant man be lockt up with a
Bible, he will return forth as
ignorant as he went in : though
the word of God be not ob-
scure in it selfe, yet to an igno-
rant man, that which is plaine
and that which is obscure is all
one : but let the Book be open-
ed, the Text read and ex-
pounded, and then by the
blessing of God upon it, as *Chrysostome*
speakes, the most unlearned
learned man that is, shall under-
stand. And were there also
constant preaching Ministry
setled (as much as is possible)
in every place and corner of
the land, and not onely pub-
lique

Dedictory.

nd ique preaching , but also fre-
esequent catechising in publique
no-congregations , and private fa-
amilies enjoined , and effectua-
asally maintained against the ma-
ighnifold discouragements of this
ob-Iron Age , the darknesse of ig-
no-norance might soon vanish, and
nebe expelled out of our coasts.
allNow the consideration of the
engrosse ignorance of most peo-
exple and congregations in this
theclear Sun-shine of the Gospel,
brywas not the least motive indu-
uncing me to the study and publi-
uncation of these Sermons , being
e also importuned by divers godly
teryMinisters , and other Christian
blefriends, to bring them into the
r opublique view. My desire here-
pubin is to further the simplest of
liquo my

The Epistle

Heb. 5.
12.

my Countrey-men in the knowledge of God, hoping they will not slight my poor endeavours, for whose sake they were primarily undertaken; and those are all ignorant persons, that have lived under the Gospel so long, that for their time they might have been teachers, but by reason of their grosse and dull eares, are but babes in understanding, and have needder to be taught the first principles of the Oracles of God.

And now (much honoured but Sirs) your good understanding in the mystery of Christ affe your unfeigned love to learning and true Religion, your great respects shewed to all Gods faithful Ministers, which have

Dedictory.

have the happineſſe (as my ſelf
w- have had) to be acquainted with
ey. you, have emboldned me to
ea- preſent this Treatiſe to you, upon
ere whom God hath ſtamp't his own
oſe image in an eminent manner,
hat (as it were upon his own Gold)
l ſo more then upon many others
hey of your rank. You deſerve (I
but confeſſe) a greater testimony of
and my reſpects unto you, then
s in this cluster or two of my ſlen-
needder vintage; which I here offer
rin- to you, not ſo much to feed
God your appetite, as to quicken it;
ired but where power is wanting, I
and humbly intreat, that a ſincere
ariſt affection may make the ſupply;
earn and if by this tender of mine,
you you may receive any little be-
o alſe fit, I ſhall crave this recom-
which penſe
have

The Epistle

pense of you , That you would be earnest with God in my behalfe , to make me faithful and profitable in my function , to the end of my dayes. The value of Paper-presents is but small, and the lesse to be esteemed of; by how much this Age of ours hath made the number of Books to be the purgation of distempered braines; I beg this favour of you , To have this little piece of coine laid up in your closets, as an acknowledgement of a greater obligation : and if after your many weighty and publique affaires , you shall sometimes looke into this book, I hope you may meet with some passage therein, that may yield you
som

Dedictory.

ould be content , and further
be- our growth in the knowledge
and our Lord and Saviour Jesus
to rist. And leaving this Ma-
va- al with you as a testimony
but that respect, which your
em- orships many wayes chal-
Age ge from me, I remain

Your Worships in all

{ respective Services

to be commanded,

W- G.

TO

The Epistle

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Dedicatory.

some content , and further
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Christ. And leaving this Ma-
nual with you as a testimony
of that respect, which your
Worships many wayes chal-
lenge from me , I remain

Your Worships in all

{ respective Services

to be commanded,

W- G.

TO

Dedication

and further
our power in the knowledge
of the Lord's will
And having this
and with you as a testimony
of the Lord's will
I remain
your obedient servant

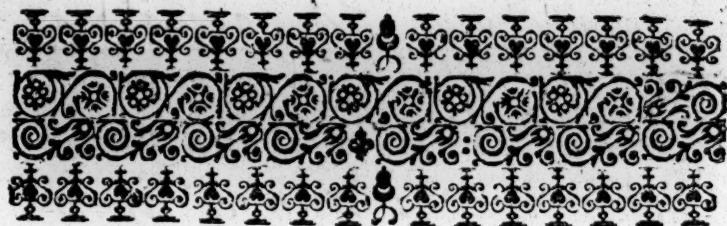
Wm. G. - 17

Wm. G. - 17

Wm. G. - 17

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TO THE READER.

T *Hese are dayes that
abound in the
means of saving
knowledge, but
few partake of
it: the most, like brutes, do alto-
gether neglect it: others seek af-
ter it, but not as for Gold; and
many there be that preferre chil-
dish toyes, and trifling know-
ledge,*

To the Reader

ledge, before that wisdom that is from above. A natural man is apt to affect things more or lesse according to the sense and understanding that he hath of them; now a natural man cannot understand the things of the spirit, therefore he cannot truly affect them: the excellent knowledge of Christ, the glorious priviledges of the Gospel, are things transcending all created understanding; the love of Christ is a love
Ephs. 3. that passeth knowledge, saith the
19. Apostle; the Peace of God, a
Phil. 4. 7. peace that passeth all understanding; communion with God in the Spirit, and joy in the Holy Ghost, these are things that even the understanding of a spiritual man cannot reach unto:
but

To the Reader.

but a natural man is in darke-
nesse, and altogether blinde to-
wards them: Faith is the evi-
dence of things not seen, it
discovereth to a believing soul,
things invisible. A carnal man
wanteth faith, therefore when
the glorious excellencies of the
Gospel are presented before him,
he wanteth an evidence to dis-
cover these things unto him:
visible things being presented;
are to be seen with bodily eyes,
but spiritual and invisible things
cannot be seen by those that want
the eye of Faith. For judge-
ment, I am come into the
world, saith our Saviour, that
they which see not may see,
and they that see, may be
made blind. As to the humble
a 2 soul;

Joh. 9^d
39.

To the Reader.

Prov. 17.
16.

soul; he sets up a light within, enabling it with Moses, to see him that is invisible; but on the contrary, he leaves them in their natural blindness, who are wise in their own conceits. It is the complaint of Solomon, Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom: seeing he hath no heart to it? There is a rich price in hand, much means of knowledge, by Preaching, Expounding, Writing, Catechising, the things of God excellently and clearly set out to us; but all this while, this price is in the hand of a fool, one who (though worldly wise) yet wanteth the light of the Spirit to direct him to true happiness,

To the Reader.

pinesse, and to shew him the worth of Heavenly things, and thereupon it followeth, that he hath no heart to it. A similitude taken from a Man that is going to a Town or City, where there is some great Mart or Faire, with money in his hand to buy Commodities; but for want of judgement he passeth by the most advantageous Commodities, being ignorant of the goodnesse and profitablenesse of them, and throwes away his money upon toyes and trifles, that are of no advantage to him:

So there is a price put into the hands of the sonnes of men, to get Heavenly Wisdom, but the carnal worldling remaines

To the Reader.

a starke foole, he cannot see in-
to the excellency of Heavenly
things, and thereupon hath no
heart to them but passeth by them,
and embraceth a thing of nought
instead of them. God is to be
sought above all, and may be
found of all that will seek after
him, and take any paines to
know him: but the greatest part
of the World have not a minde
to know him, and therefore
Hof. 6. 3. doe not follow on to know
him.

When man will not use those
helpes that God hath left him to
search after the saving know-
ledge of God; God justly suf-
fereth him to fall into divers
opinions, and grosse conceits,
which shut him up in the bot-
tome

To the Reader.

tome of a stinking Dungeon, where he findeth nothing but ignorance, error, and irkesome uncertainties, as filthy vermine, creeping round about him; where the darknesse of ignorance fills the minde, the Prince of darknesse fills the heart. The Sepia or Cuttle-fish, saith Tertullian, when he is in danger to be taken, casteth about him a black inkie matter, wherewith he darkneth the water, that the Fishermen cannot see him: So many people do seek to compassse themselves with the darke cloudes of ignorance, to hide themselves and their wicked practises, which would appeare to be very odious, should they come to be viewed, and surveyed by the light

Tertull. contr. Marcion.

a 4 of

To the Reader.

of the Word. And for many others, that are a little enlightened, they professe wisdom, but they practise folly, and so their knowledge is no better than ignorance.

But he that hath had experience of the freeness of Gods grace, and the riches of his mercy, that hath felt the lively workings of the Spirit of God upon his heart, that man hath an experimentall knowledge of God; and this is, after a sort, to eat of the Tree of Life: the more acquaintance he hath with God, the more he desireth, and beggeth acquaintance with him: though every hour he give him a fresh taste of his goodnesse; yet he ever findeth a new and most
plea-

To the Reader.

pleasant sweetnesse in it : the more knowledge a man hath of God, the more he knoweth his own duty towards him, and he that savingly knoweth God, dareth not either neglect his duty, or do it decitfully : he that hath made proof of Gods goodnesse, dareth not make triall of evil, he knoweth, if he should, he should do it to his cost.

What man can reckon himself a Christian, that is ignorant of God? without the knowledge of God, all that we do is but in a customary or uncertain way : hereby we know whom we serve, and the great advantages we shall reape by his Service, and are sensible of our estate in Grace, measuring Gods gracious presence

To the Reader.

sence with us, or his absence and
with-drawings from us, and our
own strength, and weaknesse;
it is the earnest of our Heaven-
ly Inheritance, the first frutes
of the Beatifick Vision, our ac-
quaintance with his face in this
Life, and our Heaven upon
Earth.

And now (Reader) if thou
art in an ignorant estate, and one
who art willing to be brought to
the sense of thy ignorance and
blindnesse, and so to come to him
who is the Light of the World;
Then say I to thee, as Jehu to
Jonadab. Give me thy hand,
and thou and I shall quickly
accord, and thou shalt be a
fit, and welcome Reader, to this
poor Treatise; and I hope I have
writ

To the Reader.

written that which shall be both
for thy satisfaction and com-
fort.

I have here laboured for such
plainnesse, as might best informe
thy judgement, and affect thy
heart; purposely avoyding that
unnecessary artificialnesse, which
might make it like those Spi-
ders webs (to which one once
compared Logick) which are said
to be much in workmanship,
but in profit nothing.

χίαν τε-
χνήκοι
μὲν ἀφ-
ελίμοι.

My hearty desire is, (if the
will of the Lord be so) to do a
double good, with these my poor
labours, and therefore to write
the same things which at first I
Preached to my own Congrega-
tion, it is not grievous.

I have here (for the Common
good)

To the Reader

Solet
apertior
esse ser-
mo vi-
vus quā.
scriptus
Bernar.

good) changed my tongue, into a pen, though a dead letter be of lesse effectuall perswasion, than a lively voice : The scope of this Treatise is, to bring men out of darknesse, into the true light, and to shew them how to walke in the direction of that light.

That is the best knowledge which is of God, the chiefest good, a knowledge that suffereth least alteration in the hour of death, but onely admitteth of a graduall change, advancing to perfection ; All other knowledge, then, will vanish away : this is the knowledge according to godlinesse, whereunto I labour in this small Treatise to stirre thee up ; that knowing God in a saving way, thou mayest live in him, and

To the Reader.

and walke in communion with him.

The knowledge of God in Christ is the pith and marrow of Christian Religion and Profession; which whosoever wanteth, he is but the shadow of a Christian, though he abound with all other knowledge.

If this that I have now done, shall be acceptable to the Church and People of God, and be any thing (though but Goates haire towards the Lords Sanctuary) I shall rejoyce, and give God the glory, and the Reader may expect a Treatise from me on another Subject, in some short time, the Lord assisting me.

In the mean time, if thou reape
any

To the Reader.

any benefit to thy soul, by these my Labours; let God have all the glory, and me a share in thy prayers.

I shall conclude with that of Austin, who having in his Books of Christian Doctrine propounded the Rule of Christian Faith, yet notwithstanding thus concludeth: To such as understand not what I write, I answer, they must not blame me, if they conceive not these things, as if I shewed them with my finger; the Moon, or a Starre which they would see, being not very clear; and if they have not eyes to see my finger (much lesse a Starre) they must not be offended at me, if

To the Reader.

These if they see it not: So they
all who reading these things, can-
by not yet see the things which
in the Scripture are darke and
of obscure; let them cease to blame
me, and rather pray to the
Lord to give them eye-sight;
for I may point with my fin-
ger, but cannot give them eyes
to see the things that I point
to.

Now that the God of our
Lord Jesus Christ, the Father Eph. i.
of Glory, may give unto you, 17, 18.
the spirit of wisdom and re-
velation in the knowledge of
him, the eyes of your un-
derstanding being opened, that
you may know what is the
hope of his Calling, and what
the

To the Reader.

the Riches of the Glory of his
Inheritance in the Saints; *I shall*
not cease to pray, and rest,

Thine in the Lord.

W. G.

f his
shall

Errata.

IN Epist-Dedicat, line 13, read there. l. *penult.* r. *may*
page 13. l. 1. r. *he.* p. 47. *marg.* r. *ut--fatundi.* p. 48. l. 1. *dele*
a. p. 49. l. 4. r. *hearts.* p. 77. l. 29. r. *sight.* p. 80. *marg.* r. *Tit.*
p. 81. d. (.) p. 91. l. 26. r. *servants.* p. 98. l. 15. r. *she.* p. 104. l. 8
r. *the.* p. 106. l. 1. r. *my.* l. 8. r. *dye.* p. 111. l. 8. r. *Hilkiah.* p. 115.
l. 7. r. *will be.* p. 127. l. 9. r. *Lelius.* p. 151. l. 9. r. *croffe.* l. 11.
r. *wickednesses.* p. 156. l. 6. r. *knowing.* p. 172. *marg.* r. *Samue-*
lis educatione. p. 187. l. 26. r. *sins.* Some few literals more
there be, but so obvious, the Reader may passe them
over without prejudice, or correct them at his pleasure.



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THE ARRAIGNMENT OF IGNORANCE.

From *Hos.* 4.6.

*My people are destroyed for lack
of Knowledge.*



IN the three foregoing Chapters were typical Prophecies; in this fourth, and in the following Chapters are plain Oracles and predictions, not covered with Types. This Chapter is a sharp Sermon to the ten Tribes, the beginning whereof consisteth :

B

1. In

The Arraignment of Ignorance.

1 In a citation of them to Gods tribunal: *Hear ye the Word of the Lord, ye children of Israel: for the Lord hath a controversie with the inhabitants of the Land, v. 1.* as if he should say, Seeing ye set at nought, and lightly esteem all the admonitions of the Prophets, I cite you by Gods appointment to his tribunal, to hear the controversie which he hath with you, and most of the inhabitants of the land.

2. In an accusation of them for their sins, he accuseth them for their *sins* against their *Neighbour*, and against *God*.

1. He chargeth them with their sins against their *Neighbour*, which he sets down in two things; want of *Truth*, want of *Mercy*, *There is no truth nor mercy in the land, ver. 1.* Righteousnesse is there understood for *truth* by a *Synecdoche*, *There is no truth*, (that is, there is no righteousnesse and justice) *in the land*: and by *mercy* is understood bountifulesse and liberality to those that are in misery; this also was not to be found in the land, though there were many objects of mercy, yet there were none that would put on bowels of mercy.

2. He chargeth them with their sins against *God*, and the first and leading sin, is, their Ignorance of *God*, *there is no knowledge of God in the Land*: in this sixth verse, the Prophet aggravateth this sin of theirs, shewing that ignorance is the cause of their destruction, *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge*;

In

The Arraignment of Ignorance.

3

In the words there are three things to be observed.

1. The persons of whom the Lord speaks, *his own people*, not strangers, but *his* people, that were in covenant with him, not of his elect people neither, but of those that were his people in outward profession.

My people] whether it be referred to God or to the Prophet, some make a question; but whether that affix [*meus*] be referred to God or to the Prophet, an opposition is here and elsewhere made to other people that were not Gods people, and had not the Prophets for their Monitors. This word (*my*) signifies propriety, they are called Gods people.

1. Because God had called them to be his peculiar people from all people of the earth, and the Lord had entred into covenant with them, to become their God, &c.

Amos 3. 2.

2. They had the Word and Sacraments. and sacrifices among them; and to them were committed the Oracles of God; they (and they only) had the knowledge of the true God among them.

Rom. 3. 2.

3. Of them came many holy Prophets and Patriarchs that were men in great favour with the Lord.

4. The Lord wrought many signs, wonders, and miracles among them.

5. They had many visions, prophecies, dreams, and revelations from God.

6. The *Messiah* was promised to descend of that Nation, and in particular of the Tribe of *Judah*. These were the priviledges of the people of God, which the Gentiles were destitute of, or else he saith, [*My people*] to put them in mind, what they had bin, or should be.

2. Here is the judgment or punishment threatened unto them, which is *destruction*; they are destroyed. *Vatablus* renders it, *My people shall be destroyed*. *Rivet*. thus, *My people are cut off*. Some read it thus, *My people are brought to silence*. And *Zanchy* saith, that *Verbum pereundi*, tam ad spiritualem, quam ad carnalem, & politicam mortem refertur, *Zanch. in loc.* This word [destroyed] hath as well relation to their spiritual, as to their carnal and politick death.

And it is said here, they are destroyed or cut off, to denote the certainty of the judgment, they shall as surely be destroyed, as if they were already cut off and rooted out.

3. Here is expressed the cause of their destruction, and that is *ignorance*, for want of the knowledge of God. This people were not destitute of knowledge, as the Gentiles, who had not the Law of God: but therefore were they without knowledge, because when they had the Law, they neglected the use of it, and when they were admonished by the Prophets, they contemned their admonitions,

*Perdetur
populus
meus.*

Vatab.

*Excisus est
populus me-*

us. Rivet.

Conticuit,

Vulg.

Alii, ad si-

lentium re-

daetus est

populus me-

us.

The Arraignment of Ignorance.

5

monitions, and therefore perished, because they would be destroyed. *Mibeli badaat*, signifies, *absque scientia illa*, without that knowledge. *Vatablus* referreth that knowledge to the knowledge of God, which the Land is said to be destitute of, v.1.

This speech of the Prophet, in the name of the Lord, is an astonishing speech, *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge*: as if he should say, it were no wonder if other people should want the knowledge of God, and so be destroyed, but that my people should be *destroyed for lack of knowledge*, this is matter of astonishment: the Lord had *shewen his word unto Jacob, his Statutes and his judgments unto Israel, he had not dealt so with any Nation, nor had they the knowledge of his judgments*: This people were esteemed in the sight of the Nations to be a wise and an understanding people, therefore *Israel*, God's people could have no plea for their ignorance, having the Law of God, which the Gentiles had not: they were destitute of knowledge, because they wilfully shut their eyes against the light that shined upon them, therefore their punishment was most just, in that they were cut off, that they should not be further accounted for the people of God. I proceed to the point of *Instruction*.

Psal. 147.
19 20.
Deut. 4.6.

That ignorance is the main and principal cause of a peoples destruction: I do not say,

Doctrine

6 The Arraignment of Ignorance.

it is the onely cause, but it is a principal cause of a peoples ruine : the Apostle Paul saith, that destruction and misery are in the wayes of wicked men, and then addeth this as the reason thereof, *and the way of peace they have not known*; the Lord accounts them poor and foolish that know not the way of the Lord, and the judgment of their God; and the mouth of the foolish is neer to destruction, Prov. 10.14.

Rom. 3.16,
17.

Jer. 5.4.

Jer. 5.

1. It brings many outward calamities upon a people : *My people are gone into captivity for lack of knowledge*, saith the Lord, *a rod is for the back of him that is void of understanding*, saith the wise man, the whip of Gods wrath is their due, the rod and not reason must prevail with them, they must be instructed *βραχίον, non λόγος*.

2 It brings everlasting ruine upon a people that live and die in it, God will pour out his wrath upon them that know him not, and Christ shall be revealed in flaming fire against them that know not God, &c. 2 Thess. 1. 7,8,9. *who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*

In the handling of this Doctrine, let us inquire,

What is Ignorance ?

Quest. 1.

Answer.

Ignorance is a great blot upon mans nature or a want of that cleer and perfect light that was in man at his first creation, being made after

The Arraignment of Ignorance.

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after the image of God, which principally consisted in knowledge: this light being much darkned, Gods image in man is much defaced: God, at the first, gave man perfect knowledge of all things, so farre forth as he was capable of (for no infinite thing can be fully comprehended of a finite, saith the Philosopher) his knowledge was very great in natural and super-natural things: Adam was both a perfect Philosopher and a perfect Divine. Consider him first as a Philosopher, he knew himself, he knew his own condition, he knew what manner of person he was made, he understood how he ought to walk, what to have done, what to have avoided; he had a singular knowledge of the nature of all creatures, giving them names fuitable to their very natures. Adam could not chuse but know himself, when as he knew the nature of stones and plants, and beasts, and all other creatures, but now the eye of mans understanding being obscured by sin, we see natural things no better then the man in the Gospel that was blinde, who had but a little glimering of light, that could not discern between men and trees. Scholars in their studies are like Sailers in a troublesome Sea, that sail along where they cannot see their way: Socrates that was judged wisest by Apollo, said, he knew this one thing, viz. that he knew nothing. And Aristotle that knew as much of natural things, as man could

*Tristitem
habuit lo-
mo ante
luzum cog-
nitivum,
scilicet, ve-
rum propter
se falsarum
et creatu-
ris, et sui.
Lumb.
Sentent.
lib 2. Di-
stinct. 23.*

*Minima
pars eorum
qua scimus,
minima
pars eorum
qua nesci-
mus. Plac.*

know by the height of reason, faith of all things, *Videntur esse*, they only seem to be : and the *Platonists* do hold this *Paradox*, That nothing can be known as it is ; so that all mans natural knowledge now is but as a spiders web.

Having considered man as a *Philosopher*, let us see what a *Divine* he is. In the state of *innocency* man knew God, so far forth as a terrestrial creature could know his *Creatour*, he perfectly knew so much of the will and mind of God, as it concerned him to know, and was necessary for him ; he had an inbred knowledge of God ; but now if our eyes be so blind in natural things, what are they in super-natural ? the understanding of man is darkned through ignorance and blindness of the heart, saith the Apostle ; natural men are said to be *darknesse*, and to sit in *darknesse*, not as if the natural faculty of light or seeing were quite extinct by the fall of *Adam* : no, there is some inward light still in the understanding of natural men ; therefore when the Scripture taxeth all people for being a grosse and dull people, it is not for that they are altogether void of understanding, for they are wise to do evil, saith the Prophet *Jeremy*, and our Saviour saith, that the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light, they are eagle-eyed in the things of the world, and in sinful matters still, but to do good they have

Ephes. 4.

18.

Ephes. 5.8

Jer. 4.22.

Luc. 16.8.

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no knowledge. Man hath by a *natural* light, still the knowledge of God ; so the Gentiles by the *book* of the creatures knew God : and they had a *moral* knowledge of God, having some *moral* principles within, engraven upon their hearts, by which they understand both good and evill : but they are deprived of an higher *light*, a *spiritual* knowledge, a *divine* light, *lumen fidei*, the light of faith, a *super-natural* light, this is called the *true* light by the Apostle : so that *natural* or *moral* light, is but a *false*, or *dimme* light, in comparison of that which directeth a man the way to true happinesse, and this *true* light is called in Scripture, the *light of Christ*. Ephes. 5. 14. and the *light of life*. John 8. 12.

Rom. 1. 21.

1 Joh. 2. 8.

What are the *causes* of ignorance ?

Quest. 2.

Answ.

The first *cause* is the *corruption of mans nature*, the understanding of man is corrupted, and turned away from this light, unto blindness, darkness, errour, ignorance, unbelief, and misbelief ; the *understanding of man* is *darkened*, being *estranged from the life of God*, through the *ignorance that is in him*, because of the *blindnesse* or *hardnesse* of his heart : corruption and pravity hath blinded the eyes of his understanding, so that he cannot (by reason thereof) savingly see the things of God, the *natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit*, nor can he know them, because that corruption on the faculty, hath blinded the eye of his understanding, turning

Eph. 4. 18

1 Cor. 2. 14.

Acts 17.

ing it away from the chiefeſt good; man doth now but glope and feel after God, man is ſo ſtupified, that though he *hear* never ſo often, yet *underſtandeth* not in a ſaving way, like the people that live near the river *Nilus*, that are made dead by the fall of the waters of that river, for *videndo non vident*; (in ſeeing, men do

Rom. 1. 23

not ſee,) & *intelligendo non intelligunt*, in underſtanding, they do not underſtand; as evil ſtomachs turn good nourishment into bad humours, ſo evil men turn the truth of God into a lie.

The corruption of our natures hath deprived us of all thoſe principles of ſaving truth, that ſhould be in the underſtanding. The

Pſal. 14. 2.

Lord looked down from heaven, to ſee whether there were any that did underſtand and ſeek God, ſaith David. There is no principle of

light in a natural man, that gives him a ſupernatural knowledge of God. God who com-

2 Cor. 4. 6

manded light to ſhine out of darkneſſe, hath ſhined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, &c. So that till the glorious Son of righteouſneſſe ſhine into our hearts, the heart hath not one principle of of heavenly light there, and is no better then

Rom. 8. 7.

a lump of darkneſſe. The wiſdom of the fleſh is enmity againſt God, it is as it were at deadly feud with the wiſdom of the Spirit, for it will yeeld to, or grant no more, then it can ſee ground for in natural reaſon, therefore muſt needs be ſtarke blind in matters of

faith:

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faith : An instance of this, we have in *Nicodemus* a Ruler of the *Jewes*, and (no doubt) a great *Rabbi*, and well skilled in all *humane* learning, yet cannot he understand the doctrine of *regeneration*, and though our Saviour had told him of the necessity of it, and illustrated it by an excellent similitude of the *wind blowing where it listeth*, and yet *Joh. 3.* *faith* he, *how can these things be?* the reason was, because he looked upon it, through the thick spectacles of *reason*, and wanted the pure and clear eye of *faith*. Christ spake *spiritually*, and he understood him *carnally*. Another instance you have in the learned *Athenians*, who in *Pauls* time were as great Scholars, as any in the world, yet when he preacheth to them the resurrection from the dead (a doctrine crossing the principles of *natural Philosophy*, which maintaineth for an *Axiome* and *Maxime*, that *à privatione ad habitum nullus est regressus*, a *natural body* resolved into it's first elements and matter whereof it was made, cannot possibly resume the *Acts 17.* same, and live again after death) they there- 32. fore mock at him, thinking him to teach impossibilities, and to set abroad some strange *Paradox*. Now as it was with *Nicodemus* and the *Athenians* in these two points; so it is with all *natural men* (be they never so learned) in the mysteries of *Religion*, that are above the reach of *carnal reason* the light shineth in *darknesse*, and the *darknesse* comprehend-

prehendeth it not. *John* 1. 5.

2. *A second cause of ignorance is the Devill,* helping forward the corruption of man, plunging him every day further and further into sin, and casting thick fogs and mists before his eyes. *If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ who is the image of God, should shine unto them.* Two wayes is the corporal sight offended, either by injection of exterior dust into it, or by *interiour humours*, stopping the optick nerves within : So *Satan* either blindeth the eyes of *natural* men with the dust of worldly things, which he casteth into them, or by their own grosse and carnal affections; he stoppeth the Conduits of their sight, that they shall not have any true knowledge of God : likewise *Satan* bestirreth himself, and spareth no pains to blind the eyes of men, by endeavouring to keep them from the means of knowledge, or to increase in them the *darknesse of ignorance*; and from thence he labourereth to lead them to the *darknesse of sin*, from one sin and errour to another, as from one dungeon to another, till at last he bring them into his own den, the dungeon of utter *darknesse*.

3. The third cause is *God himself* : and that in divers respects.

1. When

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1. When denieth men the *means* of knowledge, as

1. The *Word* and outward Ministry: *Psal. 119. 8.*
thus they are said to *fit in darknesse*, that are
without the word, and the means of know- *Psal. 119. 105.*
ledge: *the Commandment of the Lord is pure,*
enlightening the eyes; the word is a lamp or
candle to my feet, and a light to my paths, saith
David: and the Ministers of the word are
called *the light of the world*: therefore where *Matth. 51*
God denieth a people these *outward* lights *14.*
the *means* of knowledge, that people must
needs sit in the dark dungeon of *igno-*
rance.

2. By denying or not giving in the *in-*
ward light of the *Spirit*: it is the inspiration *Job 32. 8.*
of the Almighty that giveth understanding,
not only the opening of the Scriptures, but
also the opening of the heart, and of the un- *Luke 24. 32. 45.*
derstanding is the work of the *Spirit*; till there
be an *inward* operation of the *Spirit*, the *out-*
ward means is uneffectual. It is true; the *word* *Lumen in-*
of God is like a light, and like a candle, as was *natum &*
said before, but what benefit reap blind men *illatum.*
thereby? and such are all men till God be
pleased to open their eyes by the key of the
Spirit, and anoint them with eye-salve,
Rev. 3. 18.

2. By holding in the eyes of mens *under-*
standings: as it is said of those disciples to
whom Christ appeared after his resurre-
ction, *their eyes were holden that they should*
not

not know him. Luke 24. 26. and afterwards it is said, *their eyes were opened, and they knew him*: thus when God holds the eyes of mens understanding, they cannot discern the mind of God, but remain ignorant of his will and counsell, and so he hides understanding from men: so *Moses* saith of the Israelites, *the Lord hath not given them eyes to see*: they had *sensitive* eyes to see, and *rational* eyes to understand, but they wanted *spiritual* eyes to apprehend and improve what they saw: it is God that giveth ability to each part and member, power and faculty of the soule and body, to execute and exercise their severall actions and operations, which if he withdraw, the Organs be no more then dead instruments, for we can no more see nor understand *savingly* of our selves, then an instrument lying upon a table, or hanging by the wall, can sound till it be blown and plaid upon

Object.

But it may be said that *ignorance* is a sin, how then can God blind mens eyes, or be a cause of *ignorance*, and not be the authour of sinne?

Ans^r.

The first and nearest cause is mans *corruption*; the instigator unto spiritual *blindnesse* is the *devill*; and God as a just judge blindeth mens eyes, *Isa.* 6. 10. and hardeneth mens hearts, *Exod.* 9. 12. God blindeth the eyes of many men *judicially*, that shut their eyes *wilfully* against the light they have

have received : wicked men are said to re-
 bell against the light ; of these things they are
 willingly ignorant. 2 Pet. 4. 3. when men
 have the means of knowledge and will not
 know; God saith in judgement they shall
 not know. Wicked men are *blind* and *brui-*
ish, this *blindnesse* is from God as a Judge:
blindnesse and ignorance is in wicked men a
 sin, but so is it not from God, but from the
 devill and their own naughtinesse, yet is it
 the punishment of former sins by which they
 have brought and increased this blindnesse
 upon themselves : for they were secure de-
 spisers of God and his word; therefore God
 most justly punisheth sin with sin, giving
 them up to a Spirit of slumber, to a mind
 void of judgement, that perceiveth, and un-
 derstandeth not the things of God. Muscu-
 lus saith : It was a just judgement on the
 Scribes and Pharises, because they would not
 understand when Christ spake clearly, therefore
 to their punishment he speaketh in Parables,
 speaketh obscurely: when did the Jewes be-
 tray greater blindnesse, then in the times of
 the Prophets, of Christ, and his Apostles :
 the evill disposition of wicked men is never
 more clearly discerned, then where the light of
 the truth begins to shine.

Job 24.
13.

Rom. 1.
28.

Quia cum loquebatur perspicue, noluerunt intelligere jam loquitur obscure.
 Muscul. in Mat. 13.
*Malum ingenium im-
 piorum nunquam
 claris de-
 prehendi-
 tur, quare
 ubi lux ve-
 ritatis
 splendero
 incipit.* 15.

When Jesus Christ that great light came
 into the world, when he professed himselfe
 the Messias, and would have instructed
 them in the highest mysteries of the king-

dom

dome of heaven, then doth their rage and malice the more break out against him, the more *light* they had, the more their *blindness* doth appeare. It is a great judgement, when men have eyes and cannot see with them: the wicked Jewes had eyes to see, *Corticem legis, the bark and outside of the Law, sed non penetrabant oculi eorum ad medullam, but their eyes pierced not to the marrow thereof*: when God gives men eyes to see, and they abuse their light, God in judgement blindeth their eyes, or casteth such a mist upon their understandings, that now they cannot see though they would, their eyes are so distempered, that the sight they have (like the sight of a pur-blind man) not only faileth them, but deceiveth them, making them think they *see rightly* what they *see not*; their eyes being thus darkned, they cannot understand with their hearts. The Gospel is the best means to bring us to the true knowledge of God, but if Gospel-light be abused, God then saith to his Ministers, *Isai. 6. 10.* Go, make the hearts of this people fat, shut their eyes that they may not see.

Qui privati sunt oculis non possunt videndo seduci.

I come now to confirm the point by reasons.

Reas. I. Qui per ignorantiam peccat, perniciosissime peccat. Ambr.

Ignorance is a destroying sin, and the chief cause of ruine to a people, because it is a mother-sin, and the root of many other sins, ignorance is a leading sin: there is no knowledge of God in the land, saith our Prophet,

in

in the first verse of this Chapter, and see what a troop of sins do follow this blind leader, vers. 2. *swearing, lying, killing, stealing, committing adultery, and blood toucheth blood:* therefore he that sins through ignorance, sins most perniciously. Under the Law the sacrifices offered for the *ignorances* of the people, shewed it to be a great sin: the Author to the *Hebrews* putteth it for all manner of sins whatsoever; for having spoken of the ordinary services and sacrifices performed by the ordinary Priests in the first Tabernacle, *Heb. 9. 6.* he tells us, vers. 7. that into the second Tabernacle went only the High-priest once every year, and that not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the *ignorances* of the people; where by the consent of *Expositors*, ignorance is put for all sorts of *sin*, and *Beza* saith, that *Shegioth* which is equivalent with *αἰσχύνη*, signifies as much coming of *Shaga*, which signifies to sin through ignorance, as the Learned note.

Shegioth à Shaga; per ignorantiam peccare: Pagnin.

I will instance in some particular sins, and thereby you will see ignorance to be a mother-sin.

1. It is the root of *pride*, Ignorance of God, and of a mans self puffeth up the heart with pride; he that is wise in conceit, is a fool in proof, the more we know God, the more humble shall we be in his presence, and the more we know our selves, the more vile

De ignorantia venit superbia. Bern. in Cantic.

shall we be in our own eyes ; when men are proud, it is either because they know nothing of God *at all*, or know nothing of him in a *saving* way, not knowing him as they ought to know : the more ignorant a man is of God, the more doth pride prevail upon him ; now Ignorance being the root of pride, it must be the chief cause of destruction to a people, for *pride goes before destruction*, saith the wise man, *Proverbs 16.18.*

2 Ignorance is the cause of Rebellion against God, to this purpose the Lord complains of his people, *I have nourisht and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me*, and the reason of their rebellion against God, is their ignorance of him, the
Isai. 1. 2, 3. Oxe, saith he, *knoweth his owner, and the asse his Masters crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.* Thus when Moses cometh with a message from God to Pharaoh, thus saith the Lord, *Let my people go, that they may serve me.* Pharaoh said, *Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice ? &c. I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go :*
Exod. 5. 2. Ignorance is the root of disobedience : this sin was that which brought swift destruction upon Pharaoh and his people, when Peter would have men like obedient children, he bids them not *fashion themselves according to the former lusts of their Ignorance.*

*1 Pet. 1.
14, 15.*

3. Ignorance is the root of persecution :

1. It makes men persecute Christ himself, when

when Christ called to *Saul* from heaven, as he was persecuting, and making havock of the Church, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* like one wholly ignorant of Christ, he said, *Who art thou, Lord?* the Lord answered, *I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest.* It is said by the Apostles, that *none of the Princes of this world knew Christ, for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.* Acts 9.5. A8.2.17. 1Cor.2.8.

But it may be said from *Matth. 21.38.* that they did know who Christ was, when they saw the Son, they said among themselves, *This is the heir, come let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance, and they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him:* in this place it is evident, that they did know him, and in the other place, that they did not know him, for they would not have crucified him, if they had known him: how shall these places be reconciled? Object.

They did know him, in regard of the reality of the thing, but they had not an effectual knowledge able to change their minds and affections, that were set to crucify the Lord of Glory: thus people that have the means of knowledge may be said to be ignorant. Resp.

First, In regard they may have a general knowledge, and yet be ignorant in the particular application of what they know.

C 2

Secondly,

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Secondly, in regard they may have a particular knowledge, and yet be ignorant in regard of an effectual knowledge, and this kinde of ignorance is a destroying sin, a man may know what is to be done, and in particular, that such a thing is to be done, and yet this knowledge is uneffectual, if it change not the will and affections to yield obedience, and so it is no better then ignorance; *He that saith, he knoweth God, and keepeth not his commandements, is a lyar*; the sons of *Eli* were sons of *Belial*, and it is said of them, *They knew not the Lord*, though they were the Priests of the Lord, whose lips should preserve knowledge, *Malachi 2. 7.*

And as ignorance makes men persecute Christ himself; so it makes them persecutors of the faithful messengers and members of Christ. Ignorant men love not their teachers, that be eyes to guide them, feers to go before, though they stand in danger of their own lives to save theirs; and if the feers were once out of the way, into what error would not the blinde multitude suddenly fall? were there no faithfull Ministers to lead them, or speak to the people from God, they could not chuse but fall to every sinne against God: our Saviour tells his Disciples a little before his departure out of this world: *If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute*

1 Joh. 2. 4.

1 Sam. 2.

23.

The one operates on the mind
- more than knowledge
- of the law
The other one - could through
faith to the law - but not actually

cute
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cutte you, but all these things they will do Joh. 15. 21
unto you for my names sake, the reason follow-
eth, because they know not him that sent me :
and he tells them further, that they should
put them out of the Synagogues, yea the time
cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think
that he doth God service : and gives the reason
of it: These things will they do unto you, because
they have not known the Father nor me. John
16. 2, 3. Have all the workers of iniquity no Psal. 14. 4.
knowledge, who eat up my people as bread ; the
Prophet Hosea sheweth, where there is no Psal. 74.
knowledge of God in the land, there is no truth 20.
nor mercy in the land : the dark places of the
earth are full of the habitations of cruelty;
that is, of cruell men; men that have no true
knowledge of God among them, are ready
to act ay manner of cruelty against the peo-
ple of God.

4. Ignorance is the cause of Idolatry, the
Prophet *Isaiah* shewing the dotage of idola-
ters, he sets it down thus; he falleth down to his
graven image, and worshipping it, and prayeth
unto it, and saith; deliver me, for thou art my
God; then he sheweth the root of it to be
their blockish ignorance, they have not known
nor understood; Ignorance of the true God,
makes men adore any fantasticall deity. Ig-
norant men (like bruit beasts) are ready to
run into any sin and danger.

Because ignorance is the breach of Gods Reas. 2.
Commandments, and especially the first Com-
mand.

mandment, he that is ignorant of God, is so farre from worshipping God as he ought to be worshipped, that he is an enemy to God; an ignorant man walkes in darknesse, and he that goes in the dark is apt to stumble at every stone, and fall into every ditch, he that knowes not the way to life, must needs walk in the way that goes down to the chambers of death; he that is ignorant of him who is *the Way*, will soon wander in a wildernesse where there is no way, where there is no plain and beaten path; an ignorant man runs out of Gods way, viz. the way of his Commandment, and walks in his own wayes, and runs into extreme danger every moment; an ignorant man *is blind*, he *knoweth not what he doth*; his way is darknesse, he *knoweth not at what he stumbleth*, and having often stumbled, at last he falleth into the pit of destruction, from whence he shall never see his way out; if a man be ignorant, he knoweth not where he goes, and he that walks in darknesse, *knoweth not whither he goes*, as our Saviour saith.

Prov. 4. 19.

John 11.
35.

Reas. 3.

Ignorance doth *stupidise* and harden mens hearts, they are in a miserable and damnable condition, and are not sensible that they are so, they see not their misery, therefore seek they not out for a remedy. The Church of *Laodicea* was in a blind and wretched estate, but being ignorant, she knew not that she was

Rev. 3. 17. *wretched and miserable, poor, blind, and naked.*

The

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The five foolish Virgins in the Parable slumbered and slept as well as the wise, that is, (as I conceive) they thought their condition as good as that of the wise: none are so confident as those that are most ignorant; and this confidence of theirs undoeth them: ignorance of God, makes a man an opposer of the word, which is the means of knowledge, and *who so despiseth the word shall be destroyed.*

Mat. 25. 5-

Prov. 13.
13.

Object.

But it may be said, that our Saviour Christ praying for the Jewes that persecuted him unto death, putteth an ignoramus in the plea to make it more plausible; for thus it runneth. *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do:* and Paul making confession of his mis-demeanors, saith, that he *had been a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious;* but saith he, *I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly;* &c. and under the Law, we read, that if ought were committed by ignorance, without the knowledge of the congregation, &c. that the Priest should *make an atonement for all the congregation of the children of Israel, and it should be forgiven them, for it is ignorance,* &c. and the Priest was to make an atonement for the soule that sinneth ignorantly, when he sinned by ignorance before the Lord to make an atonement for him, and it should be forgiven him.

Luke 23.
34.

1 Tim. 1.
13.

Num. 15.
25 28.

That ignorance here in these alledged Res^p. 1. places

places, cannot be said to be *medium impetrationis misericordiae*, the meanes or cause of obtaining mercy and forgivenesse, but onely sheweth the extent of mercy: so we find that sin is said to be forgiven upon our confession of sin; not that repentance or confession are apt or innate in themselves to procure pardoning mercy, but onely that the Lord hath been pleased to prescribe this as a way how to dispence his mercy to us; so when it is said that Paul, and the Israelites obtained mercy, because they sinned through ignorance, it setteth out but only the order, and not the cause of mercy.

2. That simple ignorance of the mind of God doth excuse à tanto, though not à toto; for our Saviour saith, that he that knew not his Masters will, and did commit things worthy of stripes, should be beaten, though with fewer stripes, then he that knew the will of his Lord, and did it not: and in this respect the Heathen are said to have known God, and so were inexcusable, because they were bound to have known more of him; God having at first imprinted the knowledge of himselfe upon mans nature: and man having lost it through his own default.

The School men make three sorts of ignorant men, either such as know not their Lords will, because they will not know it, their ignorance is *ignorantia affectata*, an affected ignorance; when men are wilfully ignorant,

Prov. 28.

13.

1 Joh. 1. 9.

2.

Biel. sent. 2.

distin. 22.

Quest. 5.

2 Pet. 4.

3. 4.

norant, wilfully refusing to know such things as might hinder them from sin, or further them in godlinesse; this is *ignorantia voluntaria*, men being *willingly ignorant*, that they may walk the more freely after their own lusts, and our Saviour tells us it is the nature of wicked men to *love darknesse rather then light, because their deeds are evill, and to hate the light, and not to come to the light, lest their evill deeds should be reprov'd*, i. e. manifested thereby to their consciences, as the thief and the adulterer love the twilight, and the darkest night, because it hideth their wickednesses; So *prophane sinners*, and *close hypocrites* do not desire the knowledge of Gods wayes, and would willingly be ignorant of their duty towards God, because the dark dungeon of *ignorance* hideth many a *beloved lust* from them, which they are not willing to forsake, and could not so quietly commit, were it clearly made known unto them; such men as these do bring *swift destruction* upon themselves.

2. There is a second sort which know not their Lords will, because they *care not to know it*, their *ignorance*, is a grosse, idle, and negligent *ignorance*: it is not imputed to *negligence*, if a man know not those things which he cannot know, but that is negligence, when a man careth not to know that which he might know, & ought to know, nor useth any care to know those things which appertain to

Joh. 3. 19;

20.

Ut liberius peccent, libenter ignorant, vel sciendi incuria, vel discendi desidia, vel inquirendi verecundia, vel non credendi veritati. Bern,

Ignorantia crassa, & supna.

August. ad
Valent.
Negligentia
est, quia ho-
mo deside-
rat non sci-
re quæ debe-
ret scire, nec
adhibet
solicitudi-
nem ad sci-
endum ea
quæ perti-
nent ad sa-
lutem. Ig-
norantia
Crassa pro-
venit ex
superbia,
quæ est pri-
mum vincu-
lum diabo-
li, cum quo
ligatur im-
pius, qui
non solum,
non scire
desiderat,
sed etiam
scire con-
temni; re-
quisita ad
salutem no-
luit intelli-
gere, ut
bene ageret.

to *salvation*, and such an *ignorance* is a great *fin*. Thence one of the Ancients saith; Al- though it be a more grievous thing to *fin* knowingly, then to *fin* ignorantly, yet must we not therefore fly to the darknesse of *igno- rance*, as therein to seek after an excuse, for it is one thing *not to know*, another thing, *to neglect* the means of knowledge: for a man *not to know* those things which exceed the strength of his understanding, having a de- sire to know, this ignorance hath some ex- cuse, but when men neglect to know things knowable, which are necessary to *Salvation*. This proceedeth from *pride*, which is the chiefest and first bond of the devill, with which a wicked man is bound, who not only desireth not to know, but also contemneth the knowing of those things that are requi- site to *salvation*, and this is an unnaturall kind of malice, seeing every man naturally desireth *knowledge*, and such naughtinesse doth make a man indispose himself to know, and to give himself to vain pleasures, and carnall delights, which do indispose him for the knowledge of those things which he might know. A wicked mind hateth know- ledge, and feareth to understand his duty, lest conscience compell him to do what he understandeth: of such a one *David* speaks. He hath left off to be wise, or to understand and do good. Psalm 36. 3. Such men as these shall be beaten with many stripes.

3. There

The Arraignment of Ignorance.

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3. There are such as know not their Lords will because they *cannot* know it, and this ignorance the School-men call an *invincible* ignorance, not because it is *simply* so, but because it remaineth after a man hath taken much pains, used much means, and done all that he can to remove it. The School-men say (most of them) that this ignorance doth *simply* excuse a man from sin, *non solum in tanto, sed in toto*: but this is their error: and standeth convicted by that speech of Christ already produced, *the servant that doth not his Masters will, by reason he knoweth it not, shall be beaten with stripes, though fewer*; now this ignorance shall not wholly excuse a man, because every man is bound to know God by a *positive* command, and whether we know Gods lawes, or know them not, they still bind us, as Master Perkins doth observe. Adam had the perfect knowledge of God, and lost the same for himself and his posterity: no man therefore for this is to complain against the justice of God, since that our first sin hath merited a greater punishment; I say then that this sin may excuse for the *degree* and measure of the sin, but not from the sin it self.

I come now to make use and application of the doctrine.

Is Ignorance the principal cause of a peoples destruction?

Perkins
Treatise
of Conscience.
*Nescire
malum est.*
Horat.

The

The Arraignment of Ignorance.

The first use shall be for *lamentation*: what cause have we exceedingly to lament the great *ignorance* that is among us, though God hath delivered us from that blindness and darkness, with which our forefathers were overwhelmed: Time was, men were wholly ignorant of the true God, and of his worship, even in this our land; where in divers places thereof were *Temples* and *Altars*, erected to heathenish *Idols*. viz. In *Bath* the Temple of *Apollo*, in *Leicester* the Temple of *Janus*, in *York* where *Peter's* now is, the Temple of *Bellona*, and in *London* the chief and head City of our Land, where *Paul's* is now, the Temple of *Diana*: and if there were such grosse idolatry in these principal places, what hope can there be of better things in countrey villages? all our Priests were *Painims*, our Religion was superstition, our worship idolatry; our Gods were dumb *Idols*, or *Dii stercorarii*, dung-hill deities; we were all as *Paul* saith to the *Ephesians*, *some-time darkness*; the night of that heathenish ignorance is past, and the clouds of that error scattered by the Sun-beames of the Gospel preached among us: and therefore it is much more sad and lamentable, now to see men blind and ignorant under the light of the glorious Gospel of *Christ*: what swarms of ignorant people are there every where? ignorant congregations, ignorant families, ignorant parents, ignorant children, ignorant

Stow:

Camden:

Eph. 5. 3:

The
brant
no
know
witne
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he la
more
ed by
carce
o be
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ignorant Masters, ignorant servants, there is no faithfull Minister that laboureth to know the state of his flock, but may sadly witnesse with me the truth of this thing, how few of our people and Congregations, if you come to them, that can render a sound reason of the hope that is in them: Beloved, let me tell you, that this is a woful sin in this dear light of the Gospel, and it is one of the sins for which God hath a controversie with the land this day: and it is a sin so much the more dangerous, and the more to be lamented by all that fear the Lord, because it is scarcely apprehended to be a sin: for a man to be a swearer, a liar, a drunkard, a whore-monger, an oppressour; these sins partly by the light of nature, and partly by reason of the odiousnesse of them are granted by the most, to be sins, but ignorance of God and of his word, and of those points, which are as it were the very life and marrow of Religion, this is hardly taken to be a sin: no man thinks himself the lesse wicked, because he is ignorant: this I say is the more dangerous, because it passeth away unregarded and unobserved by us: yet this is the sin that is the principal cause of a peoples destruction, a sin against which the Lord will proceed, when he cometh to judgement; the people that do not understand shall fall: This was Jesus Christs sin, which drew tears out of the eyes of our blessed Saviour, when he drew near, he beheld

Luke 29.
41.

beheld the City; and wept over it, saying; if thou hadst known, even thou at least in this thy day, &c. where you have

1. Our Saviour Christs lamentation for this sinful City, before he goes into it. Luk. 19, 41,

2. A prediction and prophesie of her destruction for her sins, and principally for her contempt of him and his Gospel, verse 43.

Isai. 49. 4.

3. The ground of this their hardnesse of heart is their ignorance of Jesus Christ, if thou hadst known, even thou in this thy day: there can be no greater grief to true faithful

Psal. 48.

1, 2:

Psal. 87. 3.

Psal. 132.

13, 14.

Act. 13. 27.

and painful Pastours, then to bestow pains to no purpose, lose their labours, and not profit their people; how doth he bewail their ignorance of himself: if thou hadst known [thou] who art the City of God, the seate of the great King, the joy of the whole earth: [yea thou] whose gates the Lord hath loved, and concerning whom most glorious things have been spoken, [thou] whom God hath chosen for his habitation and his rest; [thou] who hast often heard these things out of the Prophets, and therefore thy ignorance is grosse and palpable, not to be excused or extenuated, not being simple, but affected, and therefore thy sin and misery is the greater.

If thou hadst known the things that belong to thy peace] i. e. if thou hadst known, and wouldest acknowledge me, my benefits and blessings, that I now offer unto thee, and would bestow upon thee; for by peace here, after

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After the manner of the Hebrews, we must understand *affluentiam omnium bonorum*, abundance of all good things; it is like enough that this unhappy city, and her inhabitants knew, and were cunning in many quirks of the law, but they were not well catechised in this one needful and necessary point of the Gospel, that *Iesus Christ* was their peace, as *S. Paul* told the *Ephesians*: nor that there was *Salvation* to be had or hoped for by no other means; & thence *illa lacrimæ*, this was their sin, and this occasioned his sorrow, which he expresseth most lively, emphatically, and pathetically; by this *aposiopesis*, this abrupt speech, and imperfect sentence, if thou hadst known in this thy day: for as joy doth *dilatare cor*, enlarge the heart, and make men eloquent and fluent in speech: so, on the contrary, sorrow and grief binds up the heart, so that sorrowful persons cannot speak out the things which they do conceive; and both the tongue of a sad person, and of an angry person, doth often cleave to their jaws; for anger, see an example of the young man in the *Comedy*; see how abruptly he speaks. *Egone illam? quæ illum? quæ non?* and for grief; we have read of an old man that grievously lamenting the untimely death of his hopefull sonne, and being demanded the cause of his mourning, was not able to expresse himself, but so well as he could utter his mind, he thus by an abrupt and imperfect speech unfolded it: *Filius, unicus, habilis adolescens,*

Eph. 2. 14.

Acts 4. 12.

*Dolor cor
constringit,
ita ut do-
lentes non
possunt elo-
qui, quæ
concupiunt,
& lingua
mœrentis,
& exan-
descens.
sæpe fauci-
bus hæret.*

ingenio

ingenio pollens, &c. leaving out the verb which should have made all known; and this is usuall, as the *Philosopher* long since hath observed.

*Cura leves
loquuntur;
ingentes
stupent.*

Light cares do speak, but great ones do *stupify and astonish.* So here, when our *Savi-* our faith, if thou, even thou hadst known, &c. somewhat must be supplied. O daughter, *Sion*, and *Jerusalem*, if thou knewest as well as I do, what a wofull case thou standest in, thou wouldest weep as well as I, or if thou knewest who I were, and what I offer thee, thou wouldest willingly receive me, and not wilfully and obstinately reject me; yea, thou wouldest obey my doctrine, and so prevent thine own *destruction*.

And have not we as much cause to lament the great *ignorance* that is among our people at this day, notwithstanding all the plentiful meanes that God hath vouchsafed unto us; how many of our people are in the dark dungeon of *ignorance*, and yet perceive it not. True it is! there is much *weaknesse* of understanding, and dulnesse of apprehension in the best, but multitudes of our people have not a mind to know the Lord, as it is. *1 John 5. 20. they do not follow on to know the Lord,* many know not the grounds of Religion, and are ignorant of the doctrine of the beginning of Christ: many of people mind nothing, but the *honours, riches, and pleasures* of the world, and these they follow

Heb. 6. 2.

follow after with all their might, but they have no saving knowledge of God, and living and dying without understanding, become like the bruit beasts that perish.—And further, many there are, that do professe they know God, when in their works they do deny him, this is a practical ignorance; of such Jude speaks, in what they know naturally: as bruit beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves: their knowledge seemeth to be according to a natural light, therefore they are said to know naturally, but they act more like bruit beasts, then like rational men, and so in their actions do crosse their knowledge. Though man hath more sublime rules of instruction, then the light of nature to walk by, and in this regard attaineth to higher, and more transcendent knowledge, then bruit beasts do, that are led by a natural instinct; yet he may be said to know even as a beast, or to have but a bestial kind of knowledge; as the Prophet speaks of such in his dayes, man is brutish in his knowledge: when a mans knowledge ariseth ex principiis scientificis, from certain principles, and his actions are according to ignorance, this is to be brutish in knowledge: I shall conclude this use with the words of the Apostle to the Corinthians, awake to righteousness and sin not, or awake righteously, as the Greek hath it; with all your might labour after righteousness, 1 Cor. 15. 34. for some have not the knowledge of

D

God,

Psal. 49.
20.
Tit. I. 16.

Jude 10.

Jer. 10. 14.
In scriptu-
ra sacrâ il-
la ignorari
censemur,
quæ cognita
nullum no-
bis usum
attulerunt;
quomodo
dicimus il-
la non au-
dire, quibus
non obedi-
mus. San-
ctius.

God, I speak this to your shame: and may not this be spoken to the shame of most people and congregations, that after such clear revelation of the mind of God in Scripture, and such plentiful preaching of the word among them, yet men should be so grossely ignorant of God and his truth; many that for time and means they have had, might have been teachers of others, and yet themselves have need to be taught the first rudiments of Religion.

Use 2.

The second use is a use of confutation:

Ignoratio
Mysterio-
rum Eth-
nicorum est
illorum ve-
neratio.
Propterea,
Nō cre-
duntur my-
steria.
Synesius.
Sed non ita
in cœlesti-
bus myste-
riis.

1. It serves to confute and reprove the doctrine and practise of the Church of Rome, bearing the poor people in hand, that ignorance is the mother of devotion, and therefore perswade them that it is enough to have *fidem implicitam*, an *implicite* faith, and to believe as the Church believeth; therefore they barre them from the use of the Scriptures, either not suffering them to read them at all, or at least with the Popes spectacles, so that they may find nothing there, but what he will have there, in which dealing they tread up and down the steps of Herod, who being an Idumean by birth, yet having usurped upon the Kingdom of Iury, and intruded himself into that place, by colloquing with Augustus the Roman Emperour; scraped together all the Genealogies of the Jews from Abraham, and burnt them, lest any thing might there be found, that might

convince

convince him of strange blood, and so in time prejudice himself or his posterity, in the succession of that Crown and Kingdom; so the Papists; wheresoever their furies have prevailed, have either burnt the holy Bibles in whole, or mangled them in part, putting in, and putting out at their pleasures, as hath best fitted their purposes, not suffering the people to have them in their Mother-tongue, lest by them, as by a candle, they might discover their bad dealings, whereby they betray their cause, and bewray the badness thereof to the world, because they will not abide the light, and suffer the Scriptures to decide their doubts contrary to the practise of the ancient Fathers in the Primitive Church. Augustine being to dispute with Petilian the Donatist, saith thus; let there not be heard among us these words, I say this, or thou sayest this, but thus saith the Lord in the Scriptures. Much stir do the Papists make, to prove the people ought not to have the Scriptures in a known tongue, and so not knowledge. When we object to them that command of our Saviour, Search the Scriptures, and justly complain of their spirit contrary to Christs; Dureus denies this to be spoken to all Christians, for, saith he, How should the ignorant and unlearned search them? we answer, if Christ only had then spoken to the learned; his exception had been just, but Christ then preached to the whole people of

Ἀγνοῖα
σεμνότης
ἐπὶ τελε-
τῶν, ὅτι
διὰ τὸ
πιστεῖν ἐτα-
ρα μυσ-
τεῖα. Vid.
Causab.
exercit. ib.
cap. 43. p.
550.

Non inter
nos audi-
antur hæc
verba: ego
dico, aut tu
dici; sed
sic dicit
Dominus in
Scripturis.
August.
John 5.39.

the *Jewes*, and if to all the *Jewes*, then the same exhortation doth concern all *Christians*; and both *Jewes* and *Gentiles* by the *Scriptures* must have the knowledge of *Christ*, and of *Eternal life*; therefore all must search the *Scriptures*. When we urge that the *Bereans* searched the *Scriptures*, whether those things were so. *Bellarmino* answereth, that was because they doubted whether he was an *Apostle*, or no. But I answer, the matter is not why they searched the *Scriptures*, but that they did search them, and are commended for it by the Holy Ghost, that they compared his doctrine with the doctrine of the Prophets. Then ought all Christians thus to do, to try the *Spirits*; for now more doubt may be made, then at that time, and no search can be but by the *Scriptures*, and the knowledge of them: thus do the *Papists* keep the people from the knowledg of God, and so bring the curse of God upon them: *this people who know not the law are accursed*: therefore they must partake in the woe denounced by *Christ* against the *Lawyers*; *Wo be to you Lawyers, for ye have taken away the key of knowledge; ye entered not in your selves, and them that were entring in, you hindered*. *Matthew* saith, *You shut the gates of heaven to those that were entring in*.

Object.

It may be said, that as *Christ* is the dore, *John 10*. so he only hath the key of *David*. *Isai 22. 22*. *Revel. 3. 7*. he hath the key of knowledge.

Christ

Acts 17. 11

John 4. 1

John 7.
49.

Luke 11.
52.

Mat. 22.
13.

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Christ indeed hath it originally, and by his *Resp.*
own power, and authority, and he is said *Luke 24.*
to open the Scriptures, and to open the un- *45.*
derstandings of the disciples; and his Mi-
nisters have the key of knowledge by depu- *Mat. 16.*
tation, as a Noble-man commended his trea- *19.*
sury to his Steward: 1 Cor. 4. 1. now this
key they hid away.

1. Privatively, by hiding their talent in a
napkin, and and not opening and expound-
ing the Scriptures, and teaching men the
way of salvation, as their duty was; *The Mal. 2. 7.*
Priests lips should keep knowledge, and the
people should seek the Law of God at his
mouth: but

2. Which was worse; they hindred others
from entring, as *Joh. 9. 22.* they agreed,
that if any man did confesse Christ, he
should be put out of the Synagogue: and
thus do the *Papists*, their true successours,
who regard more their earthly preferments,
then look after an inheritance in heaven, and
they keep out those that would enter in, by
vexing all those that will not with them-
selves receive the *mark of the beast upon them.*
The Lord complaineth that the leaders of
his people *do cause them to erre, and they that Isa. 9. 16.*
are led of them, are destroyed. i. e. they are
led into errour and vanity, and destroyed
for lack of knowledge.

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2. Repr. This may serve to *reprove* all such as are ignorant, and care not for true knowledge, such as *hate* the light, and *love* darknesse, it is the property of fooles to *hate* knowledge, and *love* simplicity.

Prov. 1. 22

Quest.

But who are they that do thus despise and reject knowledge?

Resp.

In generall: all they that do despise Gods Ordinances, do despise knowledge: but more particularly.

Col. 3. 15.

1. All those that reject the word of knowledge, they that reject the reading and searching of the *Scriptures*, do reject knowledge, or if they read them sometime, will not meditate upon them, that will not let the word of God dwell in their hearts richly, and in all wisdom: as Owles and Bats fly not in the day time, but come abroad onely in the night, because all the Birds of the ayre will come about them, and chatter at them by reason of their deformed shape, so because wicked men know, that if they should frequently look into the glasse of the word they should see the ugly deformity of their own shapes, and be brought to abhorr themselves as the most stupendious monsters in the world; therefore it is, that they keep themselves in the dark dungeon of ignorance and hate the light: but this their way is their folly; they have rejected the word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them? saith the

Jerem. 8. 9. Prophet Jeremy.

2. All those that do reject & despise the faithful Ministry of the word, these do reject knowledge, when men like the deaf adder stop their ears against the voyce of the charmer, for fear lest they should be charmed by the power of that voyce, out of their works of darknesse: the Priests lips should keep knowledge, and they (i. e. the people) should seek the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts: he must so keep knowledge, as like the wise and faithfull Steward in the Gospel, he may give to his fellow servants, every one their portion in due season. Now the people are bound to seek the law at his mouth: In the name of the Law, saith one of the Ancients is contained the knowledge of all things necessary to well living: the reason followeth, because he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts. Therefore all those that live under a powerfull ministry, and resort not to the publick congregations, or judge it unnecessary to frequent those places, where the word is to be had from the mouthes of Gods faithfull Ministers; they are despisers of knowledge, because they despise the messengers of the Lord of Hosts, whose lips must preserve knowledge, and our Saviour faith, he that heareth you (speaking to those whom he sent out to preach the Gospel) heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me: therefore Christ denounced a woe against Chorazin and Bethsaida, verse 13. They were Cities near the

Mal. 2. 7.
Nominē legis conti-
netur omni-
um ad bene
vivendum
necessario-
rum cogni-
tio. Cyril:

Mar. 4.

lake of Genesareth, or Tiberias, where Christ had preacht many Sermons, done many miracles, whence he had chosen certain of his Apostles, saying, if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sydon, which have been done in you, they had long agoe repented, &c. and that it should be more tollerable for Tyre and Sydon in the day of judgement, then for them; he denounceth a woe likewise against Capernaum, and thou Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven; shalt be thrust down to hell, and then he addeth, he that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me: whereby it seemeth that those places were notorious for despising Christ and his messengers sent unto them. Capernaum was a City of Galilee, lying at the mouth of Jordan, a commodious Haven, and Harbour of ships, a place where our Saviour had often preacht, by reason of the great concourse of people that resorted thither, yea its thought that he dwelt there, and so one of the Auncients saith, that he graced Bethlem by his birth, Nazareth by his education, and Capernaum by his habitation: and so it is called his own City. Matth. 9. 1. By the phrase of lifting up to heaven, he meaneth, that it was much in request in the eyes of the world, not only by reason of her great wealth and riches, but also because she had the means of knowledge, and of salvation, having Christ daily conversing with them, and preaching to them:

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them: and by her casting down to hell, he meaneth, that she should be abased, and have her pride pluckt down in regard of her temporal estate: which came to passe not long after, when it was ruined by the Romans, and all such her inhabitants, as did reject the preaching of Christ, and his messengers sent unto them, were condemned, and went to Hell eternally. Many there are that dream of *Anabaptistical* revelations, and I know not what kind of strange and immediate inspirings, despising the publick teaching and ministry of man: I know God can teach otherwise, but I have no ground to think that he will: he that desireth to lodge among the wise, let him prepare his eare to hearken to the instruction of life, saith Solomon: thou maist never expect a blessing from him, who is a teacher of the heart; if thou despisest him whom God hath appointed to be a teacher of the Eare: as the holy Scripture is the book of wisdom, out of which God giveth subtilty to the simple, so teaching by his Ministers, is the Pipe by which this heavenly wisdom is conveyed to us from the Fountain; and no man is assured by the word of God to attain this knowledge, but by this course.

Prov. 5. 38

3. All those that reject prayer, which is a seeking of God for a blessing upon the means, whereby knowledge might be acquired. The Psalmist saith, that the Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see

Psal. 14. 3. see if there were any that did understand and seek God; If thou criest after knowledge, and

Prov. 2. 3. liftest up thy voyce for understanding, &c. there are many that pray not for knowledge, nor for a blessing on the means of knowledg, and those are such as despise knowledge. Paul speaks of such as despise the *Word*, the *Ministry*, *Prayer*; and the means of knowledge, as if their case were desperate, and saith, if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant, as if he should say, if any man will despise the means of knowledge, and chuse to be still ignorant, let him be ignorant, to his own perill be it; he will run through inner darknesse, to utter darknesse.

1st Cor. 14. 38.

I fear brethren, that the commonnesse of the word, and of preaching, hath bred the contempt thereof: I read, that when *Elephants* were first brought into *Asia*; and two of them brought and presented to King *Antiochus*, he made great account of them, and held them in high esteem, calling the one *Ajax*, and the other *Achilles*, but in processe of time growing common in the countrey, by reason of their traffick into those places, whence they came; notwithstanding, they were of no lesse use then they were before; Nay, in all likelihood of more, because they were better acquainted with the use of them, and knew better how to mannage them, yet because they were common, they contemned them, and called them *Lucanian oxen*: So doubtlesse the word of God in the dayes of

our

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our fore-fathers in this nation, when the light of Gods truth first brake out of that grosse darknesse of *Popery*: it was highly esteemed, and the godly Ministry and Preachers of the word were valued as precious jewels, but now it is just an hundred years, that we have had the Gospel among us, this very year. 1658. therefore it is as odious and loathsome, as it is common, but did men know the worth of it, they would not despise the means of knowledge.

This may reprove such as go about to hinder and discourage others from getting knowledge, such as will not enter into the Kingdom of heaven themselves, nor suffer others: how many sottish and wicked Parents will discourage their children from reading the Scriptures, and frequenting Sermons, they will not get knowledge themselves, nor suffer their children? how many Masters will not allow their servants one hour in a week to hear a Lecture, but cry to them as *Pharaoh* to the Israelites, when they spake of going out to serve the Lord; *ye are idle, ye are idle*, and so encrease their tasks: many ignorant Masters are well contented with ignorant servants, with an ignorant family like themselves: wicked wretches that are wholly led by the Prince of darknesse, do labour to hinder others from attaining the light of saving knowledge: Thus when *Sergius Paulus*, a prudent man, called
for

3. Repr.

for Paul and Barnabas, desiring to be instructed by them in the knowledge of Christ; Elymas the forcerer withstood them, seeking to turn away the Deputy from the faith: Acts 13. 8. and for this, the hand of God was upon him: the Lord smote him with corporal, who laboured to keep others in spiritual blindness, verse 11. and after the stubborn Jews had rejected the word, the Apostles turned from them to the Gentiles; yet then the Jews stirred up devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the City, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. verse 50. and for this very cause the Apostle saith, they filled up their sins, and the wrath of God comes upon them to the uttermost.

1 Theff. 2.
16.

Use 3.

Prov. 10,
14.

Prov. 4. 7.

If ignorance be the chief cause of a peoples destruction, thou suffer the word of exhortation, Let us all labour after knowledge, that we may be men of knowledge: wise men will lay up knowledge saith Solomon, or store it up, as the covetous man layes, or storeth up his bags of silver and gold. Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom, and with all thy getting, get understanding: many men spend so much of their time about getting of the world, that they can find little or no time to get wisdom and knowledge; they see the want of riches, as they think, but they see not the want of spiritual knowledge. Diogenes had a pretty answer to some that

that askt him, why *Philosophers* rather followed rich men, then rich men *Philosophers*, why! that is no marvaile at all said he, for *Philosophers* know that they want rich mens wealth, but rich men will not acknowledge that they want *Philosophers* wisdom. Most men hate the imputation of ignorance, vain man would be wise; so pleasing a thing is knowledge to reasonable creatures, not too much degenerated; and though men run a course tending to ignorance and error, yet they hate the imputation of ignorance, as a thing very reproachfull: and yet some such monsters there are, that care not to acquire any more knowledge, then is necessary to the keeping up of a poor sottish and halfe-brutish kind of life: and for God they know him not, nor do they care to know him, and if you speak of God to them, they presently cry out, like *Pharaoh*, who is the Lord?

Job 11, 14

Let therefore both ministers and people labour to be filled with knowledge.

1. But especially the Ministers of the Gospel should be knowing men. A Minister must not be like young *Samuel*, who knew not the voyce of the Lord from *Elies*, when the Lord called him, nor like *Abimaaz*, that would needs run to carry the King newes from the Camp, but when he came, knew nothing: every Scribe that is instructed unto the Kingdom of God, is like an householder,

1 Sam. 3, 10

Matth. 13. holder, that bringeth forth of his treasury
52: things both new and old. *Ministers must be knowing men.*

2. Because they are to be lights to others, therefore are they called the light of the world they are to give the knowledg of salvation to Gods people, as *Zachary* prophesied of *John Baptist*: by giving of knowledge is not meant infusing of knowledge, for this is proper to God alone, but to give notice, or make to understand; so they are said to give knowledge, *instrumentaliter & organicè*, as they are said to give faith, *1 Cor. 1. 5.* and to confirm men in the faith. *Acts 14. 22.* he that will draw disciples to Christ, and prepare their hearts for him, he must be acquainted with the Scriptures, and able out of them to instruct his people in the knowledge of salvation: Ministers are Gods Embassadors, and therefore must be able to treat of the affaires of the holy state; they must be able to publish the secrets of the Gospel. *Eph. 6. 19.* they must have the tongue of the learned, to know how to minister a word in season to a wearied soule: his lips must preserve, or be a store-house of knowledge; and *Elihu* saith, *such a messenger or interpreter, is but one of a thousand*; and *Paul* saith, *quis ad hæc idoneus who is sufficient for these things? not quisquis but quis.*

Therefore the Holy Ghost at the Feast

of Pentecost, fell upon the Apostles in fiery cloven tongues, to furnish them with zeale and knowledge, to instruct all Nations in tongues, that they might be eloquent in all manner of tongues; and in fiery tongues, that they might be inflamed with zeal: if Christ had only given his Apostles cloven tongues, and not fiery tongues also, then should they have been full of knowledge, but voyd of zeale; if fiery tongues only, and not cloven, they should have abounded with zeale, but not according to knowledge: but Christ who knew what was best in every respect, sent down the spirit both in fiery and cloven tongues, that they might have the tongue of the learned, and shew themselves men of God perfectly instructed to every good work, that their zeal might raise their discretion, and discretion govern their zeal. One saith, that Luthers zeal and courage, with Melancthon's discretion, joyned with Calvin's eloquence, would make an excellent preacher; Every Minister must be willing and able to teach, for the ignorance of the flock is the reproach of the Pastor, if it be his fault especially.

A Minister is to teach like a man of knowledge, his mouth must speak of wisdom, he must warn and teach in all wisdom. Col. 1. 28. knowledge, and much wisdom is requisite to a Minister.

Acts 2. 3.
in linguis
& in omni
genere lin-
guarum
fecundi es-
sent.

Ut fervor
discretio-
nem erigat;
& discre-
tio fervo-
rem regat.
Bern. serm.
23. in
Cant.
Pecoris ig-
norantia
est pastoris
ignominia.
Hieron.

Psal. 49. 3.
in mion
d. d. an.

Jerem. 23.
28.

1. In the choyce of a fit matter, a Minister must teach, *non inepta & futilia*, not with philosophical speculations, lying legends, and frierly fables; for what is Chaffe to the wheat saith the Lord? his doctrine must be like fire, full of light, to dispell the darknesse of ignorance, by enlightening the minds of his hearers with the saving knowledge of Gods truth, and full of heat to enflame their affections with the zeal of Gods glory: the word of God must *onely* be taught by him.

2 Tim. 3. *nec aliud, nec aliter*: he must teach no other doctrine. If we were to deal with the Heathen, we might use humane testimony to convince them, as Paul doth. Acts 17, 28. Titus 1. 12. but yet sparingly.

Scriptura-
rum ma-
millas
dum durius
presserunt,
sanguinem
pro lacte
biberunt.
August.

The main scope of the ministry is to preach sound doctrine, and for this, much knowledge is requisite, for the right opening of the Scriptures, that they may not mingle gold and drosse, wheat, and chaffe together; of which dealing an Ancient saith of hereticks, *the harder they suckt, and drew the breasts of the Scriptures, the more they drunk down blood instead of milk.*

2. In respect of the manner of his preaching, knowledga is requisite, for

1. A Minister is not rashly to run upon the handling of holy things without deliberation, and due premeditation, and preparation; his heart must be first *enditing* of good matter, before his tongue can be the

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Pen of a ready writer ; whether in Sermons, disputations, or the like. A grave Divine said, it were better men had neither tongues in their heads, nor parts in their bodies, then so boldly and busily, many times to employ them in rash reasoning, about *Election*, *Predestination*, and the *sin against the Holy Ghost*, without serious consideration, and mature deliberation: and the second part of *Arch-Bishop Cranmer's* Preface before the Church-Bible, is for the most part spent in reproving such persons: so also the 37. *injunction* appointed to be publicquely read, in *Queen Elizabeths* time: for want of this wisdom and discretion, men many times wrangle about what they understand not, like two men meeting together, the one would be of *Doctor Martins*, and the other of *Doctor Luthers* opinion, who were both one and the same.

2. As the scope of the ministry is to preach the word *purely*, so to apply it *powerfully* to the consciences of men, therefore he must not be like *Pope Bonifaces* Priests, no Clerks, nor, as our Saviour speaks of some, that are *blind leaders of the blind*: a Minister must sometimes be a *Boanerges*, a son of thunder, in denouncing the dreadful threatnings of the law against obstinate sinners, and sometimes a *Barnabas*, a son of consolation, in pronouncing the sweet and comfortable promises of the Gospel, to the broken hearted

Psal. 45.

Deering.
Lev. 27.
in Hebr.

Cæci Cæcorum
duces:
Matth. 14.

Tit. I 9.
Mark 12.
34.

ted penitent; he must be able likewise by sound doctrine both to exhort, and convince gainfayers: he must be able to resolve *doubts*, and to answer *questions*, therefore our Saviour commended the Scribe for answering wisely or discreetly: he must likewise deliver the word with authority and gravity: now to all these purposes, wisdom and much knowledge is requisite in a Minister of the word.

Jer. 3. 15.

Nehem. 8.
7, 8.

3. Ministers are to teach *manifestly*, and evidently: God gave Pastors and Teachers to the edifying of the Church, and to further it in the knowledge of God: now how shall the hearer get knowledge, when the Preacher teacheth obscurely? *he that prophesieth, speaketh unto men*: 1 Cor. 14. the main work of the Teacher must be the profit of the hearer. *I will give you Pastors after my own heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding*: what knowledge can a people reap, if they are taught obscurely? we read, that when the Levites read in the book of the Law, they caused the people to understand the Law, and the people stood in their place, *so they read in the book of the Law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading*: but what understanding can the hearer have, if the Minister teach obscurely? let them call this learned obscurity that will: I take it rather to be unlearned obscurity; for let learning appear, when

it

it should appear. Let any man shew that either the *Greek* or *Roman Oratours*, have been commended for dealing obscurely; therefore let Ministers deal *apertè & perspicuè*, in their Sermons, that the hearers may be made to understand what they teach them. *Solomon* speaks thus of himself, the more wise the Preacher was, he stil taught the people knowledg, yea he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many Proverbs: now to preach so, as to make the people to understand what they hear, much wisdom and knowledge is requisite. And here let me shew, that humane learning rightly used, is very useful and necessary to a Minister of the Gospel.

Eccles.
12. 9.

1. It is very useful and necessary to the understanding, and expounding of divers places of Scripture; where mention is made of the motions, influences, and operations of the *Sun*, *Moon*, and *Starres*, being celestially, and heavenly bodies, which places are dark and difficult, and cannot be understood without the help of naturall *Philosophy* and *Astronomy*.

Also where there are *allusions* to, and *similitudes*, and *comparisons* from, *Birds*, *Beasts*, *Fishes*, *Serpents*, &c. natural *Philosophy* is also needful.

Item, in the description of *Countries*, and regions, with their severall *Climates* and *Temperatures*, and the natures and inclinations of their inhabitants, there is use of *Cosmogra-*

phy, Geography, Topography, and naturall Philosophy too.

2. For Logick, it can by no means be lacking in a Minister, for without it we cannot in many things discern the truth, nor discover falshood; both which, both Pastor and people must endeavour to do, Ephes. 4.14. Ephes. 5.17. that we may be wise, clearly to understand what the will of the Lord is, and not be like children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men, and cunning craftinesse of those that lie in wait to deceive.

Acts 17.
28.

3. Learning is necessary to confute and confound pagans, that are not acquainted with the Scriptures; therefore Paul made use of this kind of learning at Athens, out of their own Poets, to confute them.

If one that had been born, bred, and brought up a long time under the earth, should upon the sudden be brought into the clear light of the Sun, it would so dazle his eyes, as it would almost make him starke blind; so if one that hath been nuzzled up all his time in ignorance, should at first be brought to the bright shining light of the Gospel, it would so amaze him, as he would not know, what to make of it: such therefore must be set in the Moon-shine or star-light of nature, before they be brought to the clear Sun-shine of the Scriptures, that so being overcome by common principles, whereto both

fides

sides agree, and give consent, they may be forced to yield, being foyled at their own weapons, as *Goliab* was slain with his own sword.

4. *History* and other things moving delight, may be moderately borrowed from humane *Authours*, and inserted into *Sermons*, and mixed with, and mingled among *Theological* discourses, as sauce, not so much for necessity, as for delight. The Scriptures onely be *mītar panis*, like bread, as needful and necessary food to suffice and satisfie nature, and kill hunger: and *Philosophy* and other humane learning, that may serve for sauce, both to procure appetite, and help digestion. But here let me adde this caution: Let us beware, that there be not more sauce then meat, more humanity then divinity: As *Grynæus* reporteth of a certain *Monk* of *Heidelberg*, who when *Melancthon* was a young man, lived in that University, and used to read and expound to the people in their Mother tongue, a piece of *Aristotles Ethicks*, instead of a Sermon; this was indeed to put *Hagar* in *Sarah's* place; and therefore by no means to be endured.

2. Let people also look to it, that they be men of knowledge: Every one of you professe your selves to be Gods servants, and the Lord to be your Master; now it behoves every servant to know his Master's will: Every servant of God must labour to know his will revealed in his word. A loving and dutiful wife that should have a

Non ad necessitatem, sed ad delectationem.

In his, & hujusmodi Philosophia Theologia se submittat, ut Hagar Saræ; patitur se admoneri & corrigi. Sin minus pareat, ejice Ancillam. Clem. Alexand.

Luke 12. 47.

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letter sent to her from her husband out of a far Countrey, would not throw it into a hole, and there let it lie and rot, but have it in her bosome, neer her heart and hand, that she may often peruse it, and inform her self by it; how she may the better order her businesse, according to her husbands directions contained therein; O do not rest your selves in an ignorant condition, nor content your selves with any natural wisdom and understanding, such as was in the old Philosophers, who had not the knowledge of God in Christ, but only a confused, a general knowledge, which could not lead them to happinesse. Nor must you rest content that you have worldly wit and wisdom, to get and gather together things for this life, of which Christ speaks, *Matth. 16. 26. Labour not for that wisdom that is from beneath, which is earthly, sensual, and devillish, such was the wisdom of Pharaoh, plotting to oppresse the Israelites, Come on, saith he, let us deal wisely with them, but labour for that wisdom that is from above, which as it cometh from heaven, so it carrieth the soul that hath it to heaven again, setting the heart and affections on things that are above, and let me tell you further, that it is not enough for you to have other graces, but you must also have spiritual knowledge and understanding.*

Jac 3. 15.
Exod. 1.
10.

And

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And here I shall lay down and propound two great motives to labour after saving knowledge.

1. Consider the great danger and mischief of ignorance.

2. The great benefit and excellency of knowledge.

1. For the danger and mischief of ignorance, I shall discover it in many particulars.

1. *Without knowledge a man cannot be good :*

An ignorant man cannot be a good man ; an ignorant man is apt to say, I have a good heart, and my heart is as good as the best : thou art deceived, if thou art ignorant, thou canst not be good, I do not mean of natural goodnesse one towards another, but of being good towards God. *The Soul without knowledge is not good ;* saith *Salemon*, it hath not a dram of goodnesse in it, *i. e.* of true goodnesse ; and if a mans soul be not good, his heart is naught ; an ignorant man is a wicked man, and the *heart of the wicked is little worth*, saith the wise man ; many ignorant people are ready to say, what though we be ignorant, yet we mean well, our heart is as good as the best, and we hope that God will accept of our good meanings and intentions : But how can men mean well, when they know not how to do well ? then is the heart good, when a man can say as *David*, *Lord, thou hast taught, or made me to know*

Prov. 19. 2.

Prov. 10. 20.

Psal. 51. 6.

Prov. 2. 10. *wisdom in the hidden part, or in the secret of my heart : when this wisdom entreteth into thy heart, and knowledge is pleasant to thy soul, as Salomon speaketh, when thy heart is taught of God, then it is good. A man may have a good nature, a good disposition, good natural wisdom and knowledge, but this is hateful to God, if spiritual knowledge be wanting ; the wisdom of the flesh is enmity to God ; and it is that which keeps a man off from yielding subjection to the Law of God.*

Rom. 8. 7.

A man cannot be good in any relation without knowledge : A man cannot be a good husband without knowledge.

1 Pet 3. 7.

Peter exhorts husbands to dwell with their wives, according to knowledge.

Josh. 24.

15.

Deut. 6. 7.

Jer. 10. 25.

Eph. 6. 4.

Knowledge is required of all husbands, and of all men before they be husbands, because as soon as they have wives, they are charged to shew their knowledge. Husbands must set up the worship of God, and the exercises of piety in their dwellings, by instructing their wives and children in the things of God, and by talking and discoursing of Gods Word upon all occasions, as also by praying together, that so they may keep off the curse of God from them, which shall fall upon them that know him not, and the families that call not upon his Name. A man cannot be a good Parent without knowledge. Parents are required to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the

Lord:

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Lord : how canst thou instruct thy children, while thou thy self art ignorant of God and his word ? a man cannot be a good Master, nor a good Christian without knowledge ; *God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, &c.* saith the Apostle : the first thing that God created in the world was light, and the first thing he creates in the soul of the new creature is spiritual light and knowledge ; so then unlesse we have the light of heavenly knowledge in our hearts, we cannot be good.

2 Cor. 4. 6

2. Without knowledge we cannot do good.

David makes it an indelible Character of a wicked man, to refuse knowledge ; he hath left off to understand, and to do good. Geneva, he ceaseth to use his understanding to do well. Junius, he would not understand, that he might do well, saith Hierom, upon Psal. 36. 3. under the Law God rejected the blind sacrifices, shewing how he contemneth blindness and ignorance in all those that will serve him, Malach. 1. 8. A good intention cannot make a good action ; if knowledge be wanting, it is but a blind offering, though done in obedience to Gods command. As it is will-worship, when things are done, which are not commanded, and men think by them to do God good service, so likewise when men do Gods commands for sinister respects, not know-

Psal. 36. 3.

Desinit
adhibere
intelligen-
tiam, ad
bene faci-
endum.

Junius.
Cadalleha:

skil lebe-
tib. Hebr. 1

Noluit in-
telligere ut
bene age-
ret.

Hieron.

knowing the force and ground of the command.

1. Without knowledge a man cannot repent, how can a man turn from sin, unlesse he know the nature and danger of sin, how can he turn to the Lord, unlesse he know him :

Hos. 8. 3.

When Israel turneth to the Lord, he shall cry to the Lord, My God we know thee, saith the Prophet Hosea. If you urge an ignorant man to turn from his sin, and turn to the Lord, he will answer as Pharaoh, Who is the Lord, I know not the Lord, neither will I let my beloved lusts go : how can a man repent, till his conscience be touched, and how can conscience accuse him without knowledge ? Knowledge is the effect of a good conscience, and a good conscience (like an haughty spirit) scorneth to lie in the hovel of ignorance.

2. A man cannot pray to the Lord without knowledge : *there is none that understandeth, that seeketh after God, saith the Apostle. If thou knewest, saith Christ, to the woman of Samaria, thou wouldst have asked, &c. A man may say a prayer, or read a prayer, without true knowledge, and the Lord regard them not ; but he cannot pray with the heart, nor pray spiritually without true knowledge ; that prayer is right which is done in the spirit, and with understanding. Scienter orat, qui novit quem orat, quid, & pro quo.*

Ignoti nulla cupido.

Rom. 3. 10.

Joh. 4. 10.

3 Cor. 14.

15.

Alsted,

Theolog.

Catechet.

3. Without

3. VVithout knowledge a man cannot praise God for any mercy ; *Sing ye praises with understanding*, saith the Psalmist, therefore the Saints do honour God most with their praises and confessions, because they know more of God and his goodnesse then others, and can report higher things of him. VVicked and ignorant men speak of God onely by hear-say, but they that know him, by intimate acquaintance and experience, as the Queen of *Sheba* knew more of *Salomons* wisdom by his mouth, then by his fame ; he that hath the most inward communion with God, is able to render the more abundant praises to him.

4. VVithout knowledge, a man cannot be zealous for God and his glory ; there is a blind zeal like that of Popish votaries, there may be a zeal of God, where there is no knowledge of God, as the Apostle *Paul* speaks of himself, before his conversion, that he *persecuted the Church out of zeal* ; the like he speaks of his Countrey-men the *Jews* that they *have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge*. It is good, saith the Apostle, *alwayes to be zealously affected in a good matter*, Gal. 4. 18. Now wisdom and knowledge are good guides to zeal, to keep it within compasse, that it runnot out into fury, in all pious actions let zeal be your spur, but let knowledge and wisdom be your guide.

Phil. 3. 6.

Rom. 10. 22
Zelus abs-
que scien-
tia, quā
vehemen-
tius irruit,
eo gravius
corrumpit.
Bernard.

A man

Acts 17.
23.

5. A man cannot truly *worship* God without knowledge, we must know him before we can worship him; how can we reverence him whom we do not know; *we know what we worship*, saith our Saviour; but as for all ignorant persons (like the *Samaritans*) they *worship they know not what*, and if they do him any outward service, they ignorantly worship the true God, like the *Athenians* that set up an Altar to the *unknown God*; this makes many persons to come into Gods presence, and carry themselves so irreverently as they do, because they do not know him: Such as our knowledge is, such is our worship of God.

3. *Without knowledge a man cannot receive good.*

1. Without knowledge a man cannot receive *Jesus Christ*, God first shineth into the heart with the light of knowledge, before *Jesus Christ* can be received by the hand of faith: though *Jesus Christ* when he was upon earth spake as never man spake, his preaching being with power and authority, and not like that of the Scribes, yet multitudes of his hearers could not receive him, till the eyes of their understanding were opened.

John 14.
17.

2. Without knowledge a man cannot receive the *Spirit of God*: our Saviour saith, *That the world cannot receive the Spirit of truth, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him*

him : many men make a mock and scorn of the Spirit of God, because they do not know him ; *the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishnesse to him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* 1 Cor. 2. 14

A natural man may hear of spiritual things, but cannot be in a capacity of receiving them, till he come to understand and to know them. They are riddles to a natural man, as the Apostle saith, *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entred into the heart of man to conceive the things that God hath prepared for them that love him ; he speaks there of the things of the Gospel : but, saith he, God hath revealed them to us by his spirit, and we have the mind of Christ,* 1 Cor. 2. 9. vers. ult. A natural and ignorant man is like a corrupt stomach, where no meat will digest or nourish, it doth him no good, it turneth to no good nutriment ; so it is with an ignorant soul, the spiritual things of God do him no good, they digest not in his soul, they nourish him not, because he is full of darknesse, corruption, and ignorance.

4. *Without the knowledge of God, we can have no communion and fellowship with him.*

God is light, and the ignorant man is darknesse, and *what communion hath light with darknesse ?* 2 Cor. 6. 14. God is light, and in him there is no darknesse, and while thou art in the dark dungeon of ignorance, thou canst not converse

Mr. Cotton
on John.

verse with the Father of Lights. A natural man is a blind man, he cannot see nor discern spiritual things: God takes no delight in such blind fools. If you delight yourselves in ignorance, and are unwilling to be taught, as many children and servants are, how can you have any communion with God that know him not? It is true, as a judicious Divine observeth, there are many that desire knowledge, and cannot attain it, and of such, saith he, God will either accept their desires, or give them knowledge, but such as please themselves with their ignorance, they have no communion with God, but are sealed up unto damnation. If a man walketh in darkness, and saith he hath fellowship with God, he is a liar. A man can have no communion with God in the spirit, nor in his ordinances, nor in any thing as his, without the knowledge of God; for while he liveth in the darkness of ignorance, he is without God in the world.

Col. 1, 13.

5. Without the knowledge of God men are still under the power of Satan, the Prince of darkness.

They are said to be under the power of darkness, i. e. of ignorance, and they that are under the power of darkness, are under the power of this Black Prince: the Devil himself is bound in everlasting chains under darkness, and he bindeth sinners with the chains of darkness, the darkness of ignorance.

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ignorance, and holds them under his power : therefore when a sinner is converted unto God, he is *delivered from the power of Satan, being turned from darknesse to light*, and being made a meet partaker of the inheritance of the Saints in light, he is delivered from the power of darknesse. Most men, while they are under Satans power, they are held with this chain : where ever an ignorant man goes, he goes like a fettered prisoner with his Keeper at his back : let him go to the Congregation to hear the word, there Satan either stops his ears, or blinds his eyes, or else choaks and steals away the good seed of the word out of his heart. Those that are without the acknowledgment of the truth, they are *taken captive*, or taken alive by him in his snare, and wicked spirits are said to be the *Rulers of the darknesse of this world* : Oh tremble then, thou ignorant wretch, to think to whom thou art in bondage.

Acts 26. 18

2 Tim. 2.

26.

Eph. 6. 12.

6. *While thou art ignorant, wanting the knowledge of God, thou art in subjection to every base lust.*

Paul speaking of the unregenerate State, describeth it thus : *At that time we were foolish and disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures : Fashion not your selves, saith Peter, according to the former lusts in your ignorance.* An ignorant man knoweth not what is good, and what is evil, and often putteth good for evil,

Tit. 3. 3.

1 Pet. 1. 14.

Isai 5. 10.
Prov. 14.
12.

evil, and evil for good, putteth darknesse for light, and light for darknesse; now the will and affections do for the most part follow the understanding in things that are good, I say for the most part, because the will and affections are sometimes more depraved then the understanding: and in evill things, the will and affections do altogether follow the understanding; now the understanding being darkned, and putting evill for good, and good for evill, how can it be, but a cause of divers lusts, making the soule to serve divers lusts and pleasures? Ambition, Pride, Passion, Drunkennesse, Revenge. Every sin and lust will conmand them, so long as they are without the true knowledge of God: this is a miserable slavery, to be led by their lusts, if they had eyes to see it; one lust hurries them one way, and another hurries them another way; where there is the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and vertue, such have escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust: there is no escaping the pollutions and defilements of sin and lust, but by the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

2 Pet. 1.
3:4.

7. *Ignorance makes a man like a beast; A man without knowledge is like Nebuchadnezzar, who had the heart of a beast in the shape of a man: an ignorant man hath the head and heart of a beast, an ignorant man is a very beast. For what difference*

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rence between a man and a beast? A beast hath eyes, ears, legs, as well as a man; seeth, heareth, goeth, smelleth, tasteth, as well as a man can do: nay, many beasts can doe these things better then a man can doe: a man then differeth only from a beast in *understanding* and *discourse*. Therefore saith God to his people, *Be not as the horse or mule, that hath no understanding*; as the Poet calleth an ignorant man, a *sottish man*, yea, a *sottish mule*. Ask an ignorant man what God is, what *Jesus Christ* is, what his *natures*, what his *offices* are? ask him what the *Spirit of God* is, what God requireth at his hands, how he should serve him? ask him how he will get faith? examine him about the doctrines of *Justification*, *Adoption*, *Sanctification*, what *evidences* he can shew for everlasting life and salvation, what marks of Christianity he can shew, what tokens of sound conversion and sincerity in himself, what strange answers shall you receive from an ignorant man? so that the bleating of a sheep, the neighing of an horse, or the lowing of an Oxe, is as much to the purpose, as his answers are. Is he rich? he is a rich beast; as *Diogenes Cynicus* called a rich man that was unlearned, a *sheep with a golden fleece*. Is he honourable? he is an *honourable* beast, if ignorant; as one said of an ignorant and unlearned King, that he was but a crowned Ass. *Fortune makes a man rich*, said an Heathen, *but it is wisdom makes a man*; and

Keckerm.
Physick. i.

Psal. 32. 9,
Mule nihil
sentis,
Epigram.
14.1

πρὸς αὐτὸν
χρυσόμα-
λον.

Diogenes
opulentum
quendam
indocum
ovem aureo
vellere
dixit.

Fortuna
Cræsum
facit, Mi-
nerva Pla-
tonem.

Psal. 49. 20

let me adde, it is the knowledge of God, that makes a man indeed, that makes a true Christian : *Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish* : saith the Psalmist; when man was in his highest honour, he did affect to become like God in knowledge, and therefore God made him like a beast that understandeth not; God made him like the beast: and a godly Divine of ours well observeth; it is better to be a beast, then to be like a beast: for a beast in his own condition followeth the instinct of nature, but to be like a beast, is for a man to unman himself, to degenerate to a baser condition, then that wherein he was created: therefore be not in that sottish estate, as to be like the horse or mule that hath no understanding.

8. *An ignorant state, is an estate hardly to be cured.*

That is the reason why there are so many old men that are sottish and ignorant, men that have lived sixty, seventy, or eighty years, and yet are but children in understanding: therefore the *Holy Ghost* calleth an ignorant people, *sottish children*: so the Lord complaineth, *my people is foolish, they have not known me, they are sottish children, they have no understanding*. If a man be ignorant, the elder he is, the more sottish and ignorant he growes. Ignorance in youth is sottishnesse in old age; therefore people commonly call an old ignorant man an old fool,

and

Jerem. 4.
22.

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and the Apostle Peter calleth such ignorance, *the ignorance of foolish men.* 1 Pet. 2. 15.

1. An old man thinks it a great disgrace and disparagement for him to be taught, or to learn: what saith he, have I lived to this age, and must I now be catechised?

2. Ignorant old men are very *unteachable*: if a fool be brayed in a mortar, yet his folly will not depart from him, saith Solomon: and if any man speak in the ears of a fool, he will despise the wisdom of his words. Words and persuasions are but spent in vain upon an old sottish man, who is wiser in his own conceit, then seven men that can render a reason. Prov. 23. 9. 23. A reproof will enter more into a wise man, then an hundred stripes into a foole: it is natural for old ignorant persons to frame many excuses; they are ready to say, they know enough, and as much as any body can tell them, and they need know no more, and they think themselves well where they are; they are in love with darknesse, and hate the light, and therefore like the blind Pharisees, they despise the counsell of God against themselves. Luke 7 30

3. Old men do usually hang upon some old custome or tradition of their fore-fathers, and from that they will not be beaten, though they can give no reason for it.

4. The older they grow, the weaker are their brains, and so the more unapt to learn *senex bis puer, an old man is twice a child.* Co-

*Pluto the
God of
riches
is feigned
blind by
the Poets.*

vetousnesse for the most part so possesseth old men, and this sin never waxing old, but growing green in withered and decrepit old men, their hearts being so set upon the things of the world, that they have neither heart, nor will to get knowledge.

6. Being old, and now ready to drop into the grave, they have but *a little time to be instructed*, and so at length as they lived all their dayes without knowledge, so they dye without wisdom, as *Eliphaz* speaketh, *Job* 4. 21.

*Eccles. 4.
13.*

You see then that an ignorant estate is very dangerous, because hard to be cured. *Better is poverty with wisdom, then folly with riches and honour. Better is a poor and wise child, then a foolish King, who will no more be admonished*; let me close up this with that of the Apostle. Brethren, *be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men*; or as the Greek hath it, *in understanding be ye of a ripe (or perfect) age*.

*1 Cor. 14.
20.*

9. Ignorance makes a man to slight and despise all Gods works.

David meditating on the works of God, cries out: O Lord how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep: but then he addeth: A brutish man knoweth not: neither doth a fool understand this. *Psal.* 92. 5, 6. who so is wise, will observe these things. *Psal.* 107. 43. As Pearles cast before

dogs

old dogs or swine, so are the works of God
but among ignorant persons : swine, or dogs, will
t old trample pretious pearls under their feet in
ings the dirt, but skilful Lapidaries will use them
heart, carefully, and set them in gold, and rich at-
tire. So ignorant people that know not the
into works of God, and consider not the opera-
o be tion of his hands, will contemn and despise,
d all or at least neglect the excellent documents,
dye and fruitfull instructions of Gods glory
eth, therein exhibited, whereby the Name of
God is much prophaned. A man that knows
re is and considereth the works of God, useth
red. them aright, and glorifieth God in them.
with The Dung-hill-Cock as the Fable morali-
wise zeth, doth more esteem of a barley corn,
re be then of a pretious pearl, knowing the profit
that of the one, & not the rich value of the other.
n in So blind and ignorant people, do lightly
chil- esteem of Gods glorious and wonderful
the works, preferring the dirty commodities of
ripe this dung-hill world, before the foot-
steps of Gods Majesty imprinted in his
and works, thereby exceedingly dishonouring
the Lord himself.

God, And let me adde hereunto, that ignorance
rks! makes a man lightly to esteem of God him-
hen self, and of his word. An ignorant man
ot : is ready to passe by a King without any
sal. reverence done unto him, and the Country
hese Peasant (we know) doth trample many a
fore wholesome herb under his feet, (which the
logs skilfull

skilfull Apothecary doth gather up, and make good account of) because he is ignorant of the vertues, and medicinable uses thereof, which the Apothecary knoweth: knowledge is a necessary precedent to a reverent and high estimation of God and his word; for to know the excellency of any thing, is a good preparative to a due esteem thereof.

10. Ignorance is an inlet into all errors.

*Præterita
veniam
dabit ig-
norantia
cu'ps.
Ovid:
Epist. 19.*

It is a fruitfull mother of error: An ignorant man is apt to be carried away, *καὶ λόγους* with vain and empty words. The Papists who would perswade the people they may be ignorant, and a little or no knowledge is required of them; give great occasion to us to suspect, as if they meant to make a prey of them, by seducing them with grosse errors: for then saith Chrysostome, *thieves go to stealing, when they have first put out the candle*, and in dark shops, men use to utter their base and refuse wares. It was ignorance of the doctrine of regeneration, and of the Scriptures, that made Nicodemus conceive that carnally, that our Saviour spake spiritually. It was ignorance of the Scriptures that made the Sadduces make a mock and scoffe at the resurrection, and afterwards to propound their question about a woman that had many Husbands, *Whose wife she should be in the resurrection?* Matth. 22. 23, our Saviour tells them that ignorance

Joh. 3. 3, 4.

was

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was the cause of this their errour, *ye erre, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.* verse 29. An ignorant man is a prey for every impostour and deceiver, as *Sampson* was for the *Philistines*, when his eyes were out. If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch together: *It is a people, saith God, that do erre in their hearts, and the reason is given, they have not known my wayes:* An ignorant man is the very map of change, and like children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, being not well grounded; an ignorant man like a child is apt to be taken with every new fangle, soon growing weary of every thing. The most learned are subject to errour; for at the best, they know but in part, and do frequently erre, because not wholly sanctified: knowledg then is most necessary, that we may be able to try doctrines that are brought to us, and to discern the spirits, *whether they be of God or no; the rich man is wise in his own conceit: but the poor that hath understanding can try him, saith Solomon.*

Psal. 95.
10.

Prov. 28.
11.

Lastly. An ignorant man is every moment liable to Gods wrath and vengeance. *They have not known my wayes saith the Lord, therefore I swear in my wrath; that they should not enter into my rest.* Psal. 95. ult. *Powre out thy wrath upon the Heathen, that have not known thee, &c. saith the Prophet Jeremy: the*

Jer. 10. 25

like hath *David*. *Psalm* 79. 6. Put all those together, and you may clearly see the danger of the sin of ignorance, that we may be stirred up to labour after the true knowledge of God in Jesus Christ. The case of ignorant men then is much to be pitied & lamented; for if their case be to be lamented, who through corporall blindness run into innumerable mischiefs, and at last fall into a deep gulf without hope of recovery; much more are they to be pitied, who through spirituall blindness plunge themselves into far greater evils for the present, and at last fall into the pit of everlasting destruction, without recovery. Do you not pittie blind men, when you see them go out of the way, or stumble at every block, or fall into every pit or ditch, or be misled by every false guide, or exposed to the injury of every vile and malicious person: how much more then should we sadly lament the case of those who are ignorant, lying under the punishment of spiritual blindness, which is greater then bodily blindness, beyond all comparison, and much more desperate.

Prov. 4. 7.
Phil. 3. 8.

2, The second thing by way of motive to this duty of getting knowledge, is the great worth, benefit, and excellency of knowledge: Get wisdom, saith *Solomon*; for wisdom is the principal thing: we read of the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord. And here consider

1. Knowledge

1. Knowledg is the *principal* thing where-
in the image of God consisteth: the new man Col. 3. 10.
is said to be *renewed in knowledge*, after the
image of him that created him; it is not our
substance, that is Gods image, but true
knowledge; knowledge makes a man like
unto God: this the Devill knew well enough,
when he tempted our first Parents, to eat of
the tree of knowledge of good and evill,
telling them, that God knew, *that in the day* Gen. 3. 5.
they eat thereof, their eyes should be opened, and
they should be as Gods, knowing good and evill:
Ignorance makes a man like the brut beasts
that perish, but knowledge is the renewing
of the image of God upon the soule. Pytha-
goras engraved in a stone with his own hand
these words, setting it before his Academy:
He that knoweth not in his measure what he ought
to know, scil. in divine things, is but a beast
among men; he that knoweth what is simply
needfull, and no more, is a man among men,
but he that knoweth according to the helps
vouchsafed him of God, what may well be known;
and so far as to direct himself and others aright
in the way to true happinesse, is a God among Exod. 4.
men: Thus the Lord tells Moses, he should
be to his brother Aaron instead of God.

2. Knowledge is a most enriching thing; Col. 2. 2, 3.
we read of the *riches of the full assurance of* Unicum
understanding, and of the treasures of wisdom bonum sci-
and knowledge; this makes a man rich to entia, uni-
God: there is one that is dives sibi, rich to cum malum
ignorantia.
himselfe;

Col. 1. 6.

Rev. 3. 17.

August.
Serm. 16. in
Marth.

Prov. 3. 14

himself; there is another that is *dives Deo*,
rich unto God: he that hath onely outward
treasures, is rich to himself, but he that hath
the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,
is rich in God. God never chargeth us to
be rich in worldly things, but to be rich in
knowledge, to be *filled with the knowledg of his*
will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;
where this treasure is wanting, the soule is
beggerly and bankrupt, base in Gods sight,
as he saith of the Church of *Laodicea*. Thou
sayest, *thou art rich, and encreased with goods,*
and hast need of nothing, and knowest not that
thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and
blind, and naked: A blind and ignorant
soul, is a poor, miserable, and beggerly soul.
When thou buyest a Farm, thou buyest a
good one, saith a Father, when thou marriest
a wife, thou chusest a good one; when thou
desirest children, thou desirest good ones;
and when thou hast all these riches, thou
art but poor, *inter tot dona, amongst so many*
gifts; aud, malus inter tot bona, evill among
so many good things; if thou wantest the riches
of true knowledge: men may welter upon
their Gold like *Heliogabalus*, as *Lampridius*,
and *Herodian* report of him, and yet for
spiritual knowledge, have hearts like stones,
and heads like beetles, and be beggers in the
midst of their abundance, destitute of all
heavenly riches, of riches towards God.

The merchandise of wisdom is better then the
merchan-

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merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof then
fine Gold: Merchants that trade for silver
and gold, bring in much profit, but the
merchandise of wisdom is better, and more
profitable: My fruit is better then Gold, yea
then much fine gold; saith wisdom: It brings
in peace of conscience, it filleth the heart with
unspeakable joy, it comforts the soul in the
greatest distresse; this is the fruit that grow-
eth upon the tree of Knowledge.

Prov. 3. 16

3. It far transcendeth all other kind of know-
ledge, other knowledge compared with this
knowledge, is but, as the Apostle saith, *Science*
falsely so called; what will it avail a man with
the *Grammarians* to be able to speak & write
purely, and use elegant phrases in his words,
if he want the knowledge of God to direct
him to live purely and holily; for want
whereof, he committeth many *solacismes* and
absurdities in his works and actions? what
comfort can it afford a man to have been a
fine *Rhetorician*, and eloquent *Oratour*, and
having used many pleasing words to men, if
in the mean time, he want a light within
him, to shew him how to do those things
that are pleasing to God? what will it help
the *Musitian* to have had a tunable tongue
with an untunable heart? what will it profit
the *Logician*, to be able to dispute subtilly,
if he be gravelled, and set *Non-plus* in the *De-*
vills sophistry? what will it help the *Lawyer*,
to be able to prescribe to others the rules

of

1 Tim. 6.
20.
Hac scien-
tiarum no-
bilissima,
& scientia
nobilissimo-
rum.

of equity, and *himself* to live in the practice of all iniquity? what good will it do to the *Geometrician* to know the measure and compasse of the *whole earth*, and not to know and consider that *himself* must shortly return to the earth? what will it advantage the *Astronomer* to have his eyes lifted up to heaven, if he be ignorant of the God of heaven, and his heart be groveling upon the earth? what will it help the *Arithmetician*, to be cunning and skilfull in numeration, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and all the severall branches of that Science; if in the mean time he forget *Moses numeration*, and never pray unto God to teach him to *number his dayes*, and to apply his heart unto *wisdom*; or *Zachens* division in restoring what he had ill gotten to the right owners, and disposing of what he had to spare, of what he had well gotten, to the poor and needy members of Christ? what is a man profited with the *Physician*, to know the state and constitution of other mens *bodies*, and yet be ignorant how it fares *with*, and what shall become of, his own poor *soul*! In a word, if we were so well read in histories, and had such firm and sure memories, as that we could discourse of the affaires of all forreign and farre Countries; as *Turkie, Persia*, the *East and West Indies*, &c. and in the meane time be *strangers at home*, not knowing how things go in that *Microcosme*, or little world
of

Psal. 90.
12.

of our selves, it would but little profit us? what if we could describe as in a Map or Table, the warres of the *Trojans*, *Grecians*, *Romans*, *Turks*, and *Persians*, and in the mean time be ignorant, that we have a *politick*, *powerful*, *mighty*, and *malicious Adversary*, to encounter with our selves, as *Peter* tells us, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. yea, that he useth treachery and treason against us, being in league with our owne flesh, which he stirreth up to rebell against the good motions of the spirit, and make us yeeld our selves to be his *Slaves* and *Vassals*? Beloved, all these knowledges in their kind, are good and commendable; and good ornaments to those that have attained them, and may be means to fit, and furnish men to be more serviceable to Church and common-wealth, but they must all be subordinate, and stoop to this most excellent knowledge, *the knowledge of God in Christ*. Compare this excellent knowledge, with other knowledges contained in the writings of *Philosophers*, and other humane authours, and you will find it so far to excell and exceed them all, as heaven doth the earth: for their discourses and disputations be but like spiders webs, many times so subtile, as we scarce conceive the reason of them; yet withall so light, as they yield no comfort or content, when we do conceive it; and as *Austin* saith, *their arguments are glassy, which shine with subtilty, and are broken with vanity*:

Chrysost.
Homil. 4.
in 1 Cor. 3.
Vitrea argumenta
quæ subtilitate
lucens
vanitate
franguntur.
August.

1 Cor. 2. 2.

nity: They discourse of knowledge, and dispute thereof, and yet still remain blind and ignorant as Bats, or Beetles, in respect of the main and chief knowledge, *the knowledge of God and Christ?* Paul determined to know nothing else save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. These men discourse and dispute of happiness, and yet remain themselves most miserable, being so far from enjoying it, as few or none of them ever truly knew what it was, they talk of the truth, but many of them are liars, they talk of virtue, and yet remain most vicious: briefly, we may say of all their speculations, and curious Arts and Sciences, without the saving knowledge of God in Christ, (which none of them ever attained unto by the Moon-light of nature) that it was but *docta quædam ignorantia*, a kind of learned ignorance, or ignorant kind of knowledge, as Austin calleth it, at least nothing worth in comparison of this heavenly knowledge; for, as Bernard hath noted, that is the best knowledge, not onely which makes men more learned, but better and more holy. All riches in comparison of this, is but dross and rubbish, all wisdom (in comparison of this) is but foolishnesse.

4. Knowledge is the Mother-grace.

1. It is the Mother of faith; If a man know God, he will believe and trust in him: They that know thy name will trust in thee, we have known and believed, saith the Apostle.

1 John

Scientia
optima,
non solum
quæ doctio-
res, sed quæ
meliores
homines ef-
ficat.

Bernard.

1 Gal. 9.
10.

By faith we know first truth, and things, not then faith having
a ley. By faith we know first truth, and things, not then faith having

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John 4. 16. Bellarmine saith, that Faith
ariseth from ignorance rather then from know-
ledge, because, saith he, Faith is the evidence
of things not seen: but I say, we first know a
thing, before we can believe; now where-
as the Apostle, Heb. 11. 1. saith, Faith
is the evidence of things not seen, you are to
understand that the Apostle doth not there
define faith, but onely describe it by one of
the effects of it, because it makes things
clear and evident which it never saw: as by
faith we do believe the creation of the world,
though we never saw it: sight and knowledge
is no hinderance of, but a help to, faith; as
Stephens faith was not any whit lessened, but
rather helped by his sight of Christ, sitting
at the right hand of God.

2. Knowledge is the root of love: he that
loveth not, knoweth not God, saith the A-
postle; he that knoweth God most, loveth
him best, therefore many men do not love
him, because they do not know him; there
be two feet on which we must walk to heaven,
saith one, if ever we mean to come there,
viz. Faith and Love; he that wants faith,
is lame on the right foot, and he that want-
eth love, is lame on the left foot, and both
these follow after knowledge. A man that
knoweth God in Covenant, and as an all-
sufficient God, cannot chuse but love him;
till a man knoweth Christ in the fulnesse of
his perfections as Mediatour, he cannot truly
love

Whosoever sees
the Son,
and be-
lieves in
him, shall
have ever-
lasting
life.

Joh. 6. 40:

1 Joh. 4. 8.
Visus est
prima amo-
ris linea.

Quisquis
te cogno-
scit, amat
te, plus
quam se,
et venit ad
te, ut gau-
deat de te.
Nunc est,
Domine, ut
non tantum
diligis, quan-
tum debeo,
quia non
plene cog-
nosco te:
quia parum
cognosco,
parum di-
ligo.

It is impossible to know God love
before he hath faith given Him

There is great
Difference be-
tween Illumi-
nating faith
& Salvific faith
the former
only informs
the latter
makes a man
good. The for-
mer exhibits
Christ the latter
gains Christ

1 Cor. 13.

1. 2.

August.

Soliloqu.

cap. I.

Gen. 12. 1.

Sir. 3. 3.

1 Cor. 2.

14.

love him. For as men naturally love the children of their own body, so men are apt to dote upon the brats of their own brain, and to be in love with their own imaginations, till they come to know the Lord: naturally man hath an operating fancy to set up somewhat in his understanding, and in his heart, above and besides God, till he comes to a distinct knowledg of God in Christ. It is true! it is not knowledge that makes a man a good man, but love and sanctified affections; for though I speak with the tongues of men and Angels, and though I have the gift of Prophecie, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, &c. and have not love, I am become as sounding brasse; or a tinckling cymball, and all this profiteth me nothing; the devill and wicked spirits know much, and yet have no love to God: yet there can be no love to God, where the knowledge of God is not.

3. Knowledge is the root of obedience: as soon as Abraham knew the Lord, he obeyed the voyce of the Lord, when God called him to get out of his countrey, from his kindred, and from his Fathers house: the foolish and disobedient are put together by the Apostle: disobedience springs from folly; as obedience springeth from wisdom; what is the reason? the naturall man scorneth at the things of the spirit, and they are foolishnesse to him; it is because he cannot perceive the excel-

lency

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lency of them. Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evill, that is understanding. After true knowledge, followeth obedience of the heart and life: the end of learning. The Commandement of God is obedience, for if the end of all practical knowledge be obedience, then much more the end of the commands of God: The knowledge of Christ is the only means to suppress sin and vice.

5. Knowledge is the only way to true happiness: it is the will of God that all men should be saved, saith the Apostle, but how, may some say? he addeth in the next words, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth: and it is not only the way to true happiness, but it is true happiness inchoate; this is life eternall to know thee, the only true God, and whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ, saith our Saviour. Moses first prayes to God, Lord tell me thy name; he beggeth acquaintance with God, and then saith he afterwards, Lord shew me thy glory, they that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, saith Daniel: there are no ignorant fools in Emmanuels land. Glorified creatures are said to be full of eyes within, seeing eternal happiness consisteth in vision, they must be full of heavenly light and knowledge: Now we know but in part, but then shall we know as we are knowne. 1 Cor. 13. 12.

Job. 28. 28.
Hæc ira
impetum
cohibet
superbia
tumor
sedat.

1 Tim. 2.
4. 5.

John 17. 3.

Dan. 12. 3.

Revel. 4. 8.

G

6. Know

The Arraignment of Ignorance.

6. Knowledge is very usefull and necessary to the soule.

1. To direct and guide a man: as God hath put the Sun and Moon in the Firmament to rule the day and the night, so he hath put knowledge into the soule, to guide and govern men in their practises, and to dictate to them what is to be done, what is to be avoyded. A man without knowledge, is like a blind man wanting a guide to direct him, if the understanding be clear and good, the man is safe, but if the understanding be darkened, then he falls into the pits of sin and errour; *The light of the body is the eye, saith our Saviour, if therefore thine eye be single, the whole body shall be full of light; but if thine eye be evill, thy whole body shall be full of darknesse:* The meaning is, that as the eye is the light and guide of the body, so is the understanding the guide of the soule: and as the body followeth the fortune of the eye, if the eye be single, (that is, clear and good) the whole body is full of light, and every member will be able to do its proper work, as if it had an eye in it: but if the eye be evill or blinded, then the whole body is full of darknesse, that is, every member mistaketh in its operations: as the eye in the body guideth the feet how to walk, and the hand how to work, and every member how to do his part and duty, and the whole body to decline and avoyd danger: so recti-

Matth. 6.
22.

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fixed reason, and a single eye will guide our wills and affections, teaching them what to chuse, and what to refuse; and if the judgement be cleared from corrupt principles, then the whole soule will be full of light, and the whole life of man will be good: for as where the eye is clear, and quick-sighted, the body is well guided, so where the understanding, and reason, and judgement is rightly informed, there the soule is well ordered, otherwise there is nothing but disorder and confusion. True knowledg will direct thy choyce to forsake the bad, and follow the good; to leave earthly things, and cleave to heavenly; *Wisdom is profitable to direct*, saith Solomon; *even as light directeth him in his way*: the knowledge of God in a saving way, will make thee not to place happinesse in pleasing thy humour with the ancient *Philosophers*, but it will make thee content with *Paul*, to give over all to gain *Christ*; true knowledge guideth the tongue, *understanding is a well-spring of life to him that bath it*: the heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips; that is, as if he had said, whereas a fooles heart is upon the tip of his tongue, to vent and utter whatever he knoweth at all adventures, a wise mans tongue is ordered and guided by his heart, to keep and observe a *decorum* both in speech and silence: And concerning actions, *Solomon* bringeth in

Eccles. 9.
15.
Eccles. 10.
6.

Prov. 15.
22.

PROV. 3. 19,
20.

wisdom, speaking thus in her own person, saying; *My fruit is better then Gold, yea then fine Gold, and my revenue then choyce Silver;* and then addeth a reason saying: *I lead in the way of righteousness, and in the midst of the paths of judgement.* Now on the other side, *if thine eye be evill, thy whole body is full of darknesse;* as a man that hath an ill sight, a pearl in his eye, or is pur-blind, is oftentimes, nay evermore deceived in his choyce, and misseth his mark: So he that hath his understanding darkned and dazzeled, wanteth a right judgement to guide him in the worship and service of God: the corruption of his own heart and proud flesh, the sleights and suggestions of Satan, and the evill examples of others with whom he liveth, being (as Gregory Nazianzen saith) interposed between the eye of his mind, and the light of the Gospel; as a thick cloud, or the shadow of the body of the earth, between our eyes and the light of the Sun. Now where this evill eye is, there is nothing but darknesse, and the fruits of it, amazednesse, horror, and confusion: where understanding is wanting, the whole life must be nothing but disorder: knowledge in the soule, is as a King in his Realm, the head to the body, the eye in the head, a Pilot in a ship; yea in a word, as the Sun to the world: now what truer mirrour of misery, then a Realme without a King or Governour, or whose
King

King is a child, not so much in *years* as in *discretion*, as *Rehoboam* was? and what can that body do that hath an head blind without eyes, or that is still distempered, fit for nothing but sleep? what can be expected to become of a ship, whose Pilot and guide is still stark drunk, neither knowing nor caring how to guide her at Sea, nor bring her to shore? and what greater darknesse is there in the greater world, then when the Sun (the eye thereof) hath run his race, and is gone to rest, untill his rising again? as great disorder, discomfort and confusion is there in a man without knowledge, and spirituall understanding; nay farre greater, unlesse Jesus Christ, the *Sonne of Righteousnesse*, arise in it, and shine upon it, by the beames of his grace and favour.

2. Knowledge is *usefull* to strengthen a man, a knowing man is a strong man; a fool is a weak man: *wisdome strengtheneth the wise, more then ten mighty men that are in the City*, saith Solomon: it will more support and strengthen a man, then many great friends in Court or City, it will strengthen a man in great straits; Friends may faile a man, and oftentimes do faile him: but true *wisdome* doth not faile a man in the greatest straits, it leadeth a man through the greatest difficulties, and supports him under them: to

*Eccles. 7.
19.*

Colos. 1.
9, 10, 11.

this purpose the Apostle prayeth, that the Colossians might be filled with the knowledge of Gods will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, and increase in the knowledge of God, that they might be strengthened with all might according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering, with joyfulness.

Wisdom strengthens us rightly to use our spiritual armour, both defensive, and offensive, as it is best for us, and appointed to us.

When a great King besieged a little City, and built great bulwarks against it, there was found in it, a poore wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the City: then said I, wisdom is better then strength: Eccles. 9. 14, 15, 16. and verse 18. he addeth, *Wisdom is better then weapons of warre*: the Devill is like this great King, that cometh against, and besiegeth the little City of the soule, buildeth great bulwarks against it; but a poor Christian by wisdom delivereth his soule: a man that knoweth his own weaknesse, and wants, that knoweth the necessity of grace, that knoweth Jesus Christ to be the Fountain of wisdom and strength, he goeth out of himselfe to Jesus Christ, making use of the vertue of his death and resurrection, to overcome all temptations unto sin.

3. Know-

3. Knowledge doth exceedingly encourage a man, and hearten him against all discouragements: when a man knoweth God, knoweth his service, and knoweth what God requireth at his hands, this doth exceedingly encourage a man upon the performance of his duty. Paul saith, *I am not ashamed of my sufferings for the preaching of the Gospel; and giveth this reason; for I know whom I have believed, and he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.* When a man knoweth the will of God, and walketh according to the light he hath received, when a man knoweth the promises, and his own interest in them, this doth mightily encourage a man under sufferings; when once we have gotten understanding of Christ and the Promises, and Priviledges by him, the heart is full of courage; he knoweth then, let God cast him into what state or condition he will, that it shall go well with him; this will make a man couragious in death it self: What though I die? yet saith he with *Job, I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in that he liveth, he liveth for my good: he is my life, who is the life; My life is bound up in him, who is the Fountain of Life, and because he liveth, I shall live also.*

2 Tim. 1.
12.

Job 19.25

Col. 3. 4.

Joh. 14.19

Ecclef. 11.
7.

4. Knowledge is sweet, and comfortable: light is sweet, and it is a comfortable thing for a man with his eyes to behold the light of

the Sun : So when an ignorant soul is enlightened with the true knowledge of God and his wayes ; this is very comfortable : What a comfort is it to come out of the dark *dungeon of ignorance*, into Gods marvelous *light* ? the light of knowledge raiseth a drooping spirit ; Ignorance of God, and of his Word: ignorance of our selves also, is the cause of much trouble of spirit, when we are ignorant of our own estate, and of our grounds of comfort ; It is the great design of the Devil, to blind our eyes in soul-troubles, that we may not see the Well of Comfort, that runneth by us ; as poor *Hagar*, that was ready to perish for thirst, had not eyes to see the Fountain by her : Now true knowledge leades the soul to the Promises, to the waters of Comfort, to the breasts of Consolation, where he may suck and be abundantly satisfied : *Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart* ; when grosse darknesse covereth other people, light is risen to their souls : *The light of the righteous rejoiceth, when the lampe of the wicked is put out.* The knowledge of God in a saving way, bringeth three grounds of comfort to the soul that hath it.

Psal. 97.
11.

Prov. 13-9

1. It comforteth the soul to consider, how many Wise and Learned men, are blinded by the god of this World, that, God hath hid Heavenly Mysteries from the wise and prudent

prudent of the *World*, and hath revealed them to poor babes : and to such a poor ignorant creature as he was.

2. It comforteth it to consider, what darknesse it hath sometime lived in, and that now the Lord hath called it out of darknesse, into his marvellous light. Oh ! faith such a soul, God hath done as great a work upon my heart, as he did when he commanded light to shine out of darknesse, in the beginning of the World : my heart was like the earth at that time, when there was nothing but *Tohu*, and *Bohu*, upon it, and darknesse was upon the face of the Deep, and then did the Lord make light of it : It is with Gods people before he openeth their eyes, as it was with *Abraham* ; the Lord sent on him a most fearful darknesse, even then, when he was ready to communicate a most comfortable light unto him. The Lord strook *Paul* with blindnesse, even then, when he came to open his eyes.

Choshee.
panai Te-
hom.

Gen. 1. 2.

Gen. 15.
12.

3. This further comforteth such a soul, in that God shining into it hath given it the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in *Jesus Christ* ; glorious things are now revealed to the soul, the soul seeth that now, which it never saw before, and they clearly see, that which others cannot know, nor discern : It is light in *Goshen*, where the Israelites are, when there is no light in *Egypt* : men in the same City, in the same Congre-

Ast. 9.
2 Cor. 4. 6

Congregation, in the same Seat, in the same Family, sit in darknesse, and cannot see; when others in the same places, do *clearly behold the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ*. Now if this light of the godly be so glorious and comfortable in this World, what shall it be in the World to come? when God and the Lambe shall be their immediate light? here God enlightens us by candle-light, but there the glorious Sun of Righteousnesse himself, will be our everlasting light: here our light may be darkened and eclipsed, but there shall be an eternal light without all darknesse, there shall be no night there.

5. Knowledge is useful to resolve all doubts, and difficulties, which arise in our souls; this makes a man of a full and firm resolution; a man is happy when he can say, This I know to be the mind of God, and in this will I live and die; this is the truth of God, and from this I will not be moved. Ignorance is the mother of two filthy daughters; the first daughter of Ignorance is called *dubiety*, or doubtfulnesse, which is a continual wavering in opinion; a knowing man hath a fixt spirit, and settled judgement, but an ignorant man is a *double-minded man*, though he be never so resolute and wilful in his opinions. The other daughter of Ignorance is *falsity*, or error, which setleth a man upon an unsound basis: he

*Ignorantia
duo pessi-
ma filia,
falsitas &
dubieta.*

he that is void of reason, will not be convinced by truth or reason: when there were divers opinions in the World concerning Christ, who he should be, some said he was *John Baptist*, some *Elias*, others *Jeremias*, or one of the Prophets; this variety of opinions sprang from ignorance: Some said he was *Elias*, *propter zelum & amorem veritatis*, for his zeal and love of the truth; for as *Elias* could not endure to have Gods worship mingled with idolatry; no more could Christ, as appears *Joh. 2.* by his punishing and casting out of those that bought and sold in the Temple: others said, he was *Jeremias*, *propter patientiam in adversis*, being like a lambe before the shearer, not opening his mouth, however he was abused: and others said, he was *John Baptist*, for his boldnesse in reprovng sin, and this opinion for the most part went current; and the reason why it was more favoured and followed than the rest, Divines observe to be, because a great man was Author of it; as you may see *Math. 14. 2.* for when *Herod the Tetrarch* heard of the fame of *Jesus*, he said unto his servant, *this is John the Baptist, he is risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him*: and then no matter, whether it be true or false, if *Herod* be the Author of it; for if *Abimelech* cut boughes from trees, to set the Tower in *Sichem* on fire, all the people will do so by his example.

*Math. 16.
14.*

Jud. 9. 49.

example. Here you may see the dangerous-
 nesse of ignorance, causing such various and
 erroneous opinions concerning Christ; their
 ignorance of Christ, made way to the enter-
 tainment of the *Pythagorean* opinion of the
transmigration of souls into other mens bo-
 dies, which occasioned all these errours; so
 grossely ignorant were even the better sort
 of people in Christs time, in a main funda-
 mental point of Religion, as *viz.* Whether
 he were the Messiah or no: Now on the o-
 ther side, knowledge resolves all doubts:
 though others doubted who Christ was, yet
Peter freely and clearly confesseth him, he
 doth not stay till a Council might be called,
 and the question determined among the
 Jews; but knowing who Christ was, like
 the fore-man of a Jury, he brings in the
 verdict of himself and his followers, saying,
 (as *Matthew* tells us) to our Saviour, *Thou*
art Christ, the Son of the Living God. A man
 that hath clear eyes in his head, can discern
 the light if it be shewed him, but blindness
 makes a man incapable of seeing light of-
 fered to him: knowledge resolves a man,
 and setteth his judgement; without know-
 ledge a man cannot in divers cases, discern
 truth from error: as in the body of man,
 eyes are given to distinguish of colours, ears
 to distinguish of sounds, pallats to distinguish
 of tastes; so is knowledge very useful to di-
 stinguish of Doctrines, that are tendered to

Math. 16.
 16.

us;

us; that with *David*, we may chuse the way of truth, and avoid the rocks of errour; growing in the knowledge of *Christ*, preserves a man from being carried away with the errour of the wicked. 2 Pet. 3. 17, 18.

6. Knowledge is useful to adorn the soul: knowledge is the soul's greatest ornament: wisdom (especially heavenly wisdom) makes a mans face to shine, saith the Wise man: it putteth such a luster upon a man, as outshineth all the Diadems of the greatest Princes of the World: It is an ornament of grace to the head, and chains about the neck. Persons of Renown for wisdom, were wont to wear chains of Gold about their necks, in token of honour done to them for their wisdom; for that cause *Pharaoh* put a Golden chain about the neck of *Joseph*; and the like did King *Belshazzar* unto *Daniel*, who was so Renowned for his wisdom, that in those dayes, none were esteemed wiser than he: therefore the Lord upbraided the Prince of *Tyrus*, that was puffed up with the conceit of wisdom; Behold thou art wiser than *Daniel*; that is, thou thinkest thy self wiser than *Daniel*, there is no secret they can hide from thee. How amiable was *Solomon* for his wisdom, when the Queen of *Sheba* came from a far Country to hear it? and when she had seen it, said, Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy Eccles. 8. 1
Prov. 1. 9.
Gen. 41. 39, 42.
Dan. 5. 29
Ezek. 28. 32
1 Kings 10. 8.

thy wisdom: now those that are filled with heavenly wisdom and knowledge, they wear more beautiful and glorious ornaments, than all the golden Chains in the World, As a clear, quick, and piercing eye, is a great beauty and ornament of the face of man, so a clear apprehension, a sharpe inspection and a sound judgement in the things of God, is the highest and most becoming ornament of a Christian soul.

7. Knowledge fits a man for high and eminent Employments; the best and wisest men are to be chosen to the highest places: thus upon the Tree that *Nebuchadnezzar* saw, the birds are upon the boughes, the beasts below at the root; that is, in a kingdom and common-wealth, men of worth and wisdom are to be placed above in Authority to bear Rule, and others of meaner reach, are to hold meaner places, and to be ruled and kept in obedience and subjection: for *Solomon* tells us where and when it is otherwise, there is a great confusion, *Prov. 26.*

8. *As he that bindeth a stone in a sling, so is he that gives honour to a fool*: the ordinary Translation is, *As he that putteth a stone, or a precious stone, in a heap of stones, so is he that giveth glory to a fool.* The vulgar Latine is, *Sicut qui mittit lapidem in Acervum Mercurii, ita qui tribuit honorem insipienti, As he that putteth a stone to an heap of Mercury, &c.* *Lyra* expounds it two wayes, and the first

methinks

methinks very much strained, telling us that it's a *metaphor* taken from such as cast accompts, whereof *Mercury* was the God among the superstitious Gentiles: now as in casting of accomps, wherein they anciently used little stones, the same stone sometimes lay for a penny, and sometime for many pounds, and yet the value was the same, his place being altered: So many times a fool by favour, and friendship is exalted, and advanced to high place, much beyond his desert: Another exposition he gives us, saying, that as he that putteth a stone to an heap of mercury, that is, to build him a Temple, and so set up idolatry; so is he that conferreth honour upon a fool. He confesseth also that the words in the Original tongue, may have another sense thus, *ut qui mittit lapidem in palmam fundæ*, as he that putteth a stone into the hand of a sling, so is he that gives honour to a fool. And so reads *Junius* and *Tremellius*; *ut qui applicat lapidem Balistæ*, ita qui præbet stolido honorem: and the Hebrew word *Margemah*, coming of *Ragam*, *lapidare*, or *lapidibus obruere*, to strike or kill with stones, as *Pagnine* tells us, will bear both, and signifieth either an heap of stones, or a sling to hurle stones with; and taking the words in the last sense: *Solomons* meaning may be this; As he that putteth a stone in a sling, and hurleth it, forceth it upward violently, which would and should of it self

go downward naturally, so he that advanceth a fool to honour, committeth a solcisme in nature, setting him above in authority to rule others, whose proper place is to be beneath in subjection to be ruled of others. Knowing and understanding men are fittest for places of rule and government, therefore *Pharaoh* advanced *Joseph* to high honour, *Forasmuch*, saith he, *as there is none so discreet and wise as thou art, thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word, shall all my people be ruled.* Genes. 41. 39, 40.

And now before I give directions to get knowledge, I must remove divers objections thrown in my way (or rather in their own way) by ignorant wretches: for many sottish people are apt to frame many objections against their getting of knowledge.

Object. 1. Many poor soules are apt to object and say, I am simple and ignorant, and am not book-learned, I cannot read, and I am blockish, dull of apprehension, and the like; how then can I understand the knowledge of the Lord, or the mind of God revealed in his Word?

Resp. It is a very bad thing not to be book-learned, as you say, &c. but there are three things in answer to this objection of ignorant men, that say they cannot understand.

1. Poor soules! they say they cannot get this knowlege, but the reason is, because they will not: now that they will not get holy knowledge is evident: although they cannot learn the knowledge of God, they can learn other things that are evill and vain fast enough: *My people is foolish, they have not known me, saith the Lord*: they are sottish children, they have no understanding: what altogether voyd of understanding? no; they are wise to doe evil, but to do good they have no knowledge: now this proceedeth from the evill frame and corruption of their hearts, the wisdom of the flesh assisteth them in doing the works of the flesh, and in counter-working the working of the Spirit; and our Saviour saith, that *the children of this world are wiser in their generation then the children of light*: they are not absolutely more wise and sagacious then the children of light in every respect, but wiser in their kind of wisdom; and in some respect; wiser for the world, and for worldly advantages: they can order all their outward affaires with much discretion; they have strange inventions to hook in a good bargain; they observe the fittest times of taking in, and putting off commodities to the most advantage, they are given to oppression, engrossings, fraud, and cozenage, and yet so cunning they are, that they keep themselves out of the reach of the Law. Now if men would employ

Jerem. 4.
21.

Luke 16. 8,
11; procr.

H

their

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their wisdom and diligence, in getting spiritual knowledge, as they lay out about the world, they might not only be wise for the world, but wise to salvation also.

Prov. i. 20.
22, 23.

*Gerunt se-
cum noxam
suam, i.e.
non tantum
consuetu-
dinem pec-
candi, sed
etiam amo-
rem pecca-
ti. Aust.
in Psal. 5.*

2. What though you are simple and unlearned yet God calleth upon such to turn unto him : *Wisdom crieth without, she uttereth her voyce in the streets, &c. saying, How long ye simple ones will ye love simplicity, and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fooles hate knowledge ? turn you at my reproof behold I will poure out my spirit upon you, I will make known my words unto you: wisdom calleth upon simple ones to leave their simplicity, with great affection he seemeth to bewaile mens simplicity, and kindly invites them to repentance : you have continued too long in your folly and simplicity, it is high time now to think of returning to the wayes of wisdom; it is a great weaknesse for a man to be simple, but to be in love with simplicity is egregious madnesse ; it is the worst of evils to be in love with folly : hearken therefore to wisdomes call, give eare to his reproof, and turn in to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is this wisdom here meant, and he hath promised to poure his spirit upon you, and to make known his words unto you, and then you shall be filled with all true wisdom, and spiritual understanding; here then is Gods promise to the simple and unlearned : mark what David saith, the testi-*
mony

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mony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the Lord not only gives wisdom, but subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge, and discretion; yong men, of all other, are most rash and heady, and very unteachable, yet the Lord gives subtilty to the simple, and to the young man knowledge and discretion. It was written over Pythagoras School-dore, *ἡγεμονία τοῦ εἰσιέναι*. Let no man ignorant of Geometry enter: but the Lord calleth upon ignorant persons, upon babes and little children to come to his Schoole, and be instructed in the doctrine of the beginning of Christ: the simplest that cometh to the Schoole of Christ, learneth wisdom at his very first entrance there: the entrance of thy words saith David, giveth light, it giveth understanding to the simple.

Psal. 19. 7.

Prov. 1. 4.

Psal. 119.
140.

3. Consider, that many simple ones have attained to a great measure of knowledge; who more simple then babes and little children, yet to such John writeth, *I write unto you babes, because you have known the Father*. It did not a little move our Saviour, when they forbad little children to be brought unto him: and when the chief Priests and Scribes took it ill, that the children cryed out after Christ, *Hosannah, thou Son of David*: he told them it was written, *Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, hast thou perfected praise*: though young Samuel knew not God, when he first called him, yet from that time for-

1. John 2.
13.
Basil Epist.
79. ad Ne-
ocesian.

Mat. 21. 15.
1 Sam. 3. 7

2 Chron.
34.3.

2 Tim. 3.
15.

Matth. 11.
25.
Just. Marr.
Apol. 2.

Ruffin Ec-
cles. Hist.
lib. 1. cap. 3.

Acts 6. 10.

wards he knew him : *Josiah* began to seek after the God of his Father, when he was but young : and *Paul* commendeth *Timothy*, that from a child he had known the holy Scriptures, which were able to make him wise unto salvation : It is the good will and pleasure of our heavenly Father to hide heavenly mysteries, from worldly wise men, and those that are wise in their own eyes, and to reveal them unto babes : and many that have been but children in understanding, when they have applyed their hearts to wisdom, and enclined their ears, their thoughts, their desires, their affections to wisdom, they have attained to a great measure of heavenly knowledge : when a Philosopher subtilly disputed against Christ in a great Councell; a plain simple man (to look to) stands up and makes confession of his Faith : *We believe that Jesus Christ was incarnate, &c.* O Philosopher saith he, believest thou this ? The Philosopher was presently stricken with astonishment, and said; *I could answer the Philosophers with reason, but this man speaks so powerfully, that I am not able to resist what he saith;* as it is said of the Libertines that disputed with Stephen, *they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.* So even babes and simple ones shall rise up in judgement against many men at the last day (when they shall appear before the tribunell of Christ) even against those that

that despised instruction, and hated knowledge, and set at nought holy counsells, when as poor simple and ignorant men have attained to abundance of knowledge : therefore let not your simplicity keep you off from seeking after knowledge : the Lord now calleth loud in your ears, *O ye simple ones: understand O ye brutish among the people, and ye fools, when will ye be wise? Wisdom cries, O ye simple ones understand wisdom, and ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart, receive my instruction and not silver, and knowledge rather then choyce Gold, for wisdom is better then rubies, and all desirable things are not to be compared to it.* Psal. 94. 8.
Prov. 8. 10, 11.

Object. Some will be ready further to object, and saye, We have lived many yeares, some 30, some 40, some 50, some 60 yeares without preaching, and without the meanes of knowledge, and we find we are well enough, and that there is no such great danger in ignorance, as you would bear us in hand, and we hope we shall do well enough, for time to come, without troubling our selves to get knowledge. *Object. 2.*

Resp. Dost thou think that because thou hast as yet found no trouble in an ignorant and sinful way for many years past, that thou shalt cherefore never meet with any trouble at the last, alas! thou art much mistaken : read one place of Scripture, and *Resp. 1.*

think seriously of it, and the Lord set it home on thy heart, and then come and tell me what thou thinkest of such flattering, and vain delusions of thy poor soul. *It shall come to passe that that man, when he beareth the words of this curse, that he bleisseth himself in his heart, saying I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart, to adde drunkennesse to thirst, the Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealousie shall smoake against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven, Deut. 29. 19, 20, 21. and the Lord shall separate him unto evill, out of all the Tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the Covenant, that are written in this book of the Law. Let ignorant and prophane wretches tremble at this Scripture, who have lived in ignorance and prophanenesse for many years, and let them take heed of blessing themselves in wayes of sin and ignorance, for the Lord will make his anger and his jealousie to smoak against such persons at last: Dost thou think thou shalt do well enough in the end; thou art mistaken, while thou art ignorant of God and his ways, thou art a wicked wretch: and God hath commanded his Prophets to denounce a woe against thee; Say to the righteous, it shall be well with him; then it followeth, woe to the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward*

Deut. 29.
19, 20, 21.

Isai. 10. 11

reward of his hands shall be given him.

2. Hast thou been without the meanes of grace for 30 or 40 years past, and lived in ignorance so long, and wilt thou refuse the means of grace now it is offered thee in thy age? thy sin will be double, and thy condemnation will be the greater; If I had not come and spoken to them, they had not had sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin, saith our Saviour; if thou hadst allways been without the means of knowledge, thou mightest have pleaded; *Lord had I known thy will, I would have done it*: but now Christ by his messengers hath spoken to thee, and yet thou art ignorant, and prophane, thou hast no excuse for thy sin: it is the sadning of many a Ministers heart, to see the blockish ignorance that is among their people, and that few or none will come to them to be instructed; what thronging is there to the chambers of Lawyers for their advice and counsel touching mens outward estates; what running after great men to get offices and places of preferment? what posting to Physicians for advice, if the body be sick, and a little out of frame? If an indulgent Father have his only son lie very sick by him, how earnest is he in enquiring of the physician, what he thinks will become of his poor child, and whether there be any hopes of his recovery? but the precious soul that is more worth then the whole world (as our Saviour intimateth to

Joh. 15. 22

us) this is neglected, and never lookt after : when shall you see a man or woman come to a Minister and say, O Sir, what shall I do to be saved? I am a poor ignorant creature, I pray teach me good judgement and knowledge, and cause me to understand the feare of the Lord, shew unto me the way of salvation : but (with grief I speak it) we may sit till we freeze before people will come to us on such an errand : Most people will never send to a Minister, till the Physitian leaves them, and death stands ready to take them, and then a Minister is called to come to them to speak some words of comfort to their languishing soules : and what hard censures are past upon a Minister : if he will not pronounce them then to be *meet partakers of inheritance among the Saints in light*, who have walkt in darknesse all their life : we dare not speak peace to those to whom God speaks nothing but wrath and indignation, lest we bring that curse upon us : in Deut. 27. 18. *Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of his way* : what a terrible curse would light upon us, if we should now seal you up for Gods Kingdom, when you know not one step of the way that leadeth thither; let me tell you if you die without knowledge, you die in your sins, and as death takes thee, so shall judgement find thee : and then they that said unto the Almighty in their life, *depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy wayes*, they, I say, shall hear

Deut. 27.
18.

hear God saying to them at their death, *depart from me, I know ye not, ye workers of iniquity*; or I never knew you to this day : you that have hated the light of knowledg, & the light of grace, shall be for ever without the light of life. We read in the Gospel of one that went not into the Vineyard till the 11th hour of the day, but did he refuse to go into the Vineyard when he was called? surely no : do you think it had been a tolerable excuse for him to have answered Christ, when he was called, *It is now too late, I am an old man, at the last part of my life: the better part of my life is spent and gone, I can do thee but little service now, and have but a little time to get the saving knowledge of thy will ; I will therefore shift as well as I can for that little time that remaineth, as I have done to this day ; therefore trouble me not now : you see he maketh no such excuse, but as soon as ever he is called upon to know and turn to the Lord, he goes into the Vineyard : And now if God open thine eyes in thine old age, thou wilt bitterly lament, that thou wast no sooner acquainted with God and his ways, as Austin did, who meditating on the knowledg of God, brake forth into such words as these: *Alas O Lord that I knew thee no sooner, I have begun very late to love thee, a beauty very ancient, a beauty very new: Too late have I begun ; thou wast within, and I sought for thee without, and have cast my self with such violence upon these created beauties, without knowledge of my Creator,**

August.
Meditat.

atour, to defile thy self daily more and more.

3. Dost not thou think thy condition to be dangerous, because thou art not sensible of thy danger? persons oftentimes in the greatest danger, are least sensible of their danger, as men that are sick of a phrensie, will sometimes laugh and sing, and those that are stung with an asp, they lye laughing, the poison being of that nature, as it killeth them without putting them to any present pain; these men are insensible of the dangerous estate they are in, and their friends knowing in what condition they are, do weep to see them laugh: so it fareth with them that are sick of the phrensie of sin and ignorance, and poisoned with the venome of the old Serpent, they are many times at the brink of the pit of destruction, they are at hell-mouth, and do drop into hell it self before they fear any danger, and like the Syrian souldiers that were smitten with blindness, in the midst of *Samaria*, before they knew where they were: he that should by night travel over a narrow bridge, under which were a deep river, or go upon the edge of a very steep hill, from which if he should have fallen, he must needs be drowned in the one, and break his neck from the other; he goes on without fear, but let him be brought back in the morning, and shewed what danger he escaped, and it will make him even to tremble to think of the greatnesse thereof,

2 Kings
6.20.

*Sapientis
est, non quæ
ante pedes
sunt modo
videre, sed
etiam quæ
futura sunt
prospicere.
Seneca.*

and

and then he will stand (like a man amazed) and wonder he should escape so imminent a danger: so all the while thou walkest in the darknesse, thou knowest not where thou goest, nor whither thou art going. An ignorant sinner is every moment ready to drop into the infernal pit, and *when he is near to destruction*, yet (like the Benjamites) he knoweth not that evil is near him: But if ever the Lord open his eyes by the light of his word and spirit, then he will stand amazed and wonder at the goodnesse of God towards him, he will then tremble to think of the danger he hath escaped: therefore the apostle calleth the light of grace marvellous light; because when God brings a man out of the *dungeon of darknesse into the true light*, every thing is then to the poor soul very marvellous, and full of admiration. *Judg 20. 34. 1 Pet. 2. 9.*

4. thou sayest thou art not sensible of any danger in an ignorant estate; no marvel! for thou art dead: and dead men are senselesse men, the dead know nothing. Paul tells us, that *those that have their understandings darkened, are alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them; there is no life in the soul without knowledge; spiritual knowledge is as it were, the seed of true life in the soul, and it maintaineth the life thereof; and as the body is dead without the soul, so the soul is dead without saving knowledge: therefore being* *Ephes. 4. 18.* spiri-

Ephes. 9.
14.

spiritually dead, thou must needs be insensible of thy danger; and so thou thinkest thou art in a good estate: but hear, O thou dead and sottish soul, what the Lord saith unto thee this day, out of his word; *Awake thou that sleepest, and stand up from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light*: he doth not say, Christ shall give thee life; but *Christ shall give thee light*; i. e. the light of knowledge, if thou wilt awake from thy pleasing sleep and slumber. Let me beseech you then, if you love your souls, labour to know God betimes, even in your youth: that is a commendable youth, that is old in grace, and savoureth of the wisdom of the Ancient of dayes; happy is he whom Gods effectual grace saluteth at his Cradle, whose spirit is Gods candle to discern youthful lusts and vanities, so as to avoid them. If we know God when we are young, we shall not be strangers to him when we are old: see thou that thy lampe be ready whensoever the Bridegroom passeth by thee; make not that the task of thy Age, which should be the practise of thy whole life: you know by experience, that a ship, the longer it leakes, the harder it is to be emptied; an house, the longer it goes to decay, the worse it is to repair; a nail, the further it is driven in, the harder it is to draw out again: and can we perswade our selves, that the trembling joynts, the dazeled eyes, the fainting

ing heart, and failing legs, of a decrepit and
indisciplinable old age, is able to repair the
many ruines which so many years ignorance
have brought upon us? *Are there not twelve
hours in the day, saith our Saviour? If any
man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because
he seeth, the light of this World: but if a
man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because
there is no light in him.* It is no wisdom to
defer to get the knowledge of God, till old
age cometh, which usually brings with it a
bedroll of follies to repent of: no wisdom
to post off this knowledge to the last hour:
*the Lord of the Vineyard is not alwayes in the
Market to set thee a work, saith Austin; and
no marvel, saith another Father, if that man
at the last gaspe forget himself, who in all his
life neglected to remember God.*

John 11.
9, 10.

*Non sem-
per manet
in foro pa-
ter-fami-
lias.
August.
Greg. serm.
1. de san-
ctis.*

Others are ready further to object, We
have neither time nor leisure to get know-
ledge: one saith I am in great trading, and
have a great many servants, and much busi-
nesse in my hands to look after. And an-
other saith, I have a great charge of chil-
dren at home to look to, and provide for,
and I cannot go abroad, nor spare any time
to get knowledge, I live altogether by my
labour, I can spare no time for such occa-
sions.

Object. 3.

It is not multiplicity of businesse, nor
weightinesse of affairs, that can excuse any
mans ignorance; and therefore, those that
are

Resp. 1.

1 Chron.
28. 9.

Deut. 17.
18, 19.

Josh. 1. 8.

1 Sam. 10.
25.

are in the highest places, and have the management of the greatest affairs, are charged to *know the Lord*, and to study his Word. Who hath greater affairs than a King? yet even Kings are commanded to *know the Lord*: thus David chargeth Solomon his son, now entering upon the Regal Dignity; *And thou Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy Father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind*: Kings and great Personages, are to take care of Religion, and Gods Service, which they cannot do, without the knowledge of the Lord: therefore God charged Moses, that *the King that should rule his people after him, should take a copy of his Law, and write it in a Book, and keep it by him, and read therein, all the dayes of his life, that he might learn to fear the Lord his God, and to keep all the words of that Law, and his Statutes to do them*: So God commandeth Joshua, the Captain and General of the Armies of Israel: *The Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success*. And according to the direction of God to Moses, Samuel, upon the election of Saul their first King, *having declared to the people the manner of the Kingdom, wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord, where no doubt*

the

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the King might repair to it, or have a copy taken out of it, for his private instruction. Herein doubtlesse, *Jehojada* the Priest, instructed King *Jehoshaphat*: this Book surely had been neglected by the space of 57 years, viz. the time of *Manasses* and *Amnon*, the Father and Grandfather of King *Josiah*; for in his time we read that *Helkias* the High-Priest told *Saphan* the Scribe, That he had found the Book of the Law, which he took and read, first by himself, and afterwards before the King, whose heart melted at the hearing of it, because his Predecessours had neglected the Law, and not hearkened to the words of that Book to do it. Thus you see it is not weighty affairs that must hinder men from the knowledge of the Lord. Therefore Christ upbraides *Nicodemus* for his ignorance; Art thou a Master of Israel, and knowest not these things? Ignorance of God, and of the things of God, in them that are Rulers, is a very great sin: those that rule over others, are to defend the true Religion, and the truths of Christ, and those that are professors thereof; now this they be not able to do, unless they have knowledge to discern between truth and falsehood. Now, as weighty affairs, so neither must multiplicity of businesse, hinder us from attending on the means of knowledge: to this purpose our Saviour gives *Martha* a check, that she was cumbered with too much worldly businesse, *Martha, Martha,*

2 Kings.

12.2.

2 Reg. 22.

8,9,10,11

Joh. 3. 10.

Luke 10.
41, 42.

1 Pet. 4. 9.
Math. 25.
34.

*Tempus au-
diendi &
tempus a-
gendi.
Calvin.*

Martha, thou art careful, and troubled about many things : but one thing is needful, Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her. In which speech of his, he doth not simply condemn Martha, for giving him entertainment, and a friendly welcome (for hospitality is a commendable quality, as appeareth in Abraham, Gen. 18. and Lot, Gen. 19. and the Widow of Sarepta, 1 King. 17. and the Shunamite, 2 Kings 4.) but onely lets us see, that he had rather be entertained into our hearts, than our houses ; Et attentè audiri, potius quam lautè tractari : He had rather have his Doctrine hearkened to diligently, than his person feasted daintily : and therefore he tells Martha, one thing is necessary, viz. to hearken to his word, whereby she might be made wise to salvation ; there is a time of getting knowledge, as well as a time of getting riches ; wherefore else do we hear the word ? but that we may learn to know what to do, and to do what we know ; now as Martha and Mary be Sisters, so they must not juffle, but help one another, saith Macarius : Seek first the Kingdom of heaven, and labour after that knowledge that leads to true happiness, let every thing have its right place, Government and ordering household-affairs, condemn not, and making provision for temporal things ; but every thing must be moderated, and reduced to the right order.

2. Thou

2. Thou complaineſt thou wanteſt time to get knowledge : is not this a vain plea in many men ? they can find time enough to be idle, time enough to go to the Alehouſe, and be drunk, time enough to keep vain and wicked company, and to break the Sabbath, time enough to hunt after ſenſuall pleaſures, and vain recreations, and when carnal and prophane perſons meet together, how much time will they ſpend in idle, vain, frothy, and rotten Communication, and yet can find no time for, but think it a diſgrace, to talk and confer of, the word of God ? they Lord commands us to *keep his words in our hearts, to teach them diligently to our children, to talk of them in our houſes, when we ſit down, when we walk by the way, when we lye down, and when we riſe up.*

What ! have we time enough to eat and drink, and to riſe up to play, and follow our ſports and recreations ? have we time enough to provide for our bodies and for our families ? have we time enough to pamper our fleſh, and indulge our luſts ? and cannot we ſpare a little time to get ſaving knowledge for the good of our immortal ſoules ? do you not know that Chriſt hath ſaid, if you firſt ſeek the Kingdom of God and the righteousneſſe thereof, and take care for the good of your ſoules, that God will take care for all other things for you, which you ſtand in need of; your heavenly Father know-

*The Author ſaith
in the
beginning
of the
Book of
Deuteronomy
that we ſhould
keep his words
in our hearts
Deut. 6,
6, 7.*

*Matth. 6:
32, 33.*

eth that you need these things; and he hath promised if you seek Gods Kingdom first, these things shall be added to you.

Object. 4.

Others are ready to object and say, you tell us of getting knowledge, we have had a poor and mean education, and been but little instructed in the way to get knowledge, and we find it a very hard and difficult thing; for we read, *he that will get knowledge, must seek for it as silver, and dig for it, as for hidden treasure: he must take abundance of pains to obtain it.*

Resp.

Men do frame more difficulties to themselves about the attaining of knowledge then they have cause: men might as easily learn the plain principles of Religion, as they might learn to play at Cards and Chesse, if they were as willing to learn the one, as they are to learn the other: but the plain truth is; as Peter speaks, *of these things men are willingly ignorant, they are slothfull and sluggish, and not willing to take any pains to get the knowlege of God: the sluggard cries out, there is a Lyon in the way, I shall be slain in the streets, and therefore he will take no pains to get knowledge: mark what the wise man saith, Knowledge is easie to him that understandeth, Prov. 14. 6. or to him that hath a mind to know the Lord; it is very easie, the yoke of Christ is easie, and his burden is light: So that it is a groundlesse fear*

Prov. 22.

13.

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in many men to think, that the knowledge of God, and of the mysteries of salvation, is a thing so difficult to attain: let me tell you, that you must take some pains to get knowledge, but if you be willing to put your hands and hearts to the work, it will the more easie, if you watch daily at wisdoms gates, and wait at the posts of her doors, then shall you find it more easie to you, then you can imagine; what shall men spend much time and pains to get gold and silver out of the earth, shall covetous wretches toil and moile to get a little worldly riches, and shall we not take a little pains to get that which is better then all riches, for the merchandise of it is better then the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof then fine gold. Prov. 3. 14. the sweet pleasure and inestimable profit that you will reap by it, will farre exceed all your pains and labour: let me adde by way of encouragement to you to take some pains to get knowledge, that if the salvation of your soules be necessary, then the knowledge of God is necessary, without which you cannot be saved. If therefore a man will take heed to what he reads and hears; *Encline his heart unto wisdom and understanding, and hide the knowledge of God in his heart,* and poulder upon what he readeth and heareth, that were the way to get knowledge. It is incredible to those that never made triall, to what abundance of spirituall

*Nil tam
difficile est,
quod non
soleria
vincat.*

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Ephes. 3. 4. knowledge, a poor plain man, a common and ordinary person may attain unto, and what understanding he shall have in the mystery of Christ; if he be diligent in the use of the means to acquire heavenly knowledg.

Object. 5. But ignorant persons are apt further to object and say, What needs all this running after Sermons, and reading and studying of the Scriptures, if we can but say our *Belief*, and the *Lords Prayer*, and the *ten Commandments*; we know as much as we need to know, and as much as all the preachers of the world can tell us, and we know, and are told, that if we can but love God with all our hearts, and our neighbours as our selves, it is enough; and this we are instructed in, and what need we to know any more:

Resp. If a man should speak of any Art or Science in the world, and should discourse of the great skill, and long experience, that is requisite to make a man a proficient in this or that Science, and another man that standeth by should say, tush, it is nothing but to go and do such a thing: would not such a person be an object of derision to those that should hear him? for it is not unknown, though this or that be the summe of every Art and Trade, yet in every Science there are some particular mysteries, which are not so quickly learnt, and put in practice, which a man must understand before he can be an in-

genious

genious Artist; if he have not skill in such a mystery, his labour will be without successe, as his undertaking was rash and inconsiderate: so in the businesse of Religion, we must be acquainted with the mysteries of godlinesse; there are *profunda Dei, & Spiritus*, the deep things of God and of the Spirit, and though to love God with all our heart, and to love our neighbour as our selves, be the summe of the moral precepts, yet it is necessary, that we have a more particular knowledge then the knowledge of these generals, that we know the particular branches of the mystery of godlinesse, without which we shall neither love God with all the heart, nor our neighbour as we ought: if thou wilt learn a trade, thou must first understand the rules and principles of it, and every particular branch belonging to every mystery, so if thou wilt have any understanding in the mystery of Christ, thou must be acquainted with the rules and grounds of spiritual understanding, so thou shalt neither be barren nor unfruitfull in the knowledge of Christ. 2 Pet. i. 3.

Some are ready further to object, that God is not easily known, the Scripture tells us, that no man hath seen God at any time, and no man hath seen him, nor can see him; and God is often said in Scripture to hide his face, how then can he be known by such poor creatures as we are? Object. 6. John i. 18.

Resp.

Exod. 33.
10.

We cannot know Gods Essence here, in respect of the manner of his being, thus no man hath seen him at any time, or can see him; for when *Moses* desired God to shew him the fulnesse of his glorious Majesty, God tels him, the granting his request, would be very hurtful to him, for (saith he) *there shall no man see me and live*: the weaknesse of mans fraile nature, cannot bear the infinite glory of the divine presence, but is swallowed up with the transcendent lustre of the heavenly Majesty: even as we see the sight of the eye to be dazzeled with the brightness of the Sunne shining in his strength: or a Chrystall glasse, to be broken in pieces with the strong operation of the fire; but yet there is much of God that may be seen and knowr, as the Lord tels *Moses*. *Exod. 33. 22. I will put thee, saith he, in the cleft of a rock, and I will cover thee with my hand when I passe by: after, I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back-parts, but my face shall not be seen*: where God speaks to us of himself, as of a man having face and back, shewing us hereby, that it is impossible for any man in this mortality to know the nature and being of the most high. *We know God here but in part, like the sight of a man in transitu, as he passeth along by us, whose face we discern not, whose back-parts onely we do behold*: the more exact knowledge of him is reserved for that time, when being changed into his

1 Joh 3. 2.

like-

in likenesse, we shall see him as he is, even face to face : but yet much of God may be seen and known in this life, which he calleth his back parts, his wisdom, goodnesse, mercy, grace, his long-suffering, his faithfulness and truth, his slownesse to anger, being provoked daily by the sins of men, his readinesse to pardon iniquity, transgression and sin : these back-parts of Jehovah are clearly revealed in the word, And when God is said in Scripture to hide his face from his people, it is not that we should not see him, but that we should the more earnestly seek after him : the Lord is willing to be known unto any, that have a mind to know him : God takes no delight in hiding himself from us, but is willing to open and manifest himself to us ; God stands not upon State, as some great Princes do, that seldom shew themselves, but think their presence and converse lesseneth their respect : the more we know man ; the more we shall understand his errours and imperfections, as well as his excellencies ; but the more we know God, the more we shall admire him : none admire him so much as the holy Angels that see most of him, that *Matth. 18. 19.* *alwayes behold the face of our Father which is in heaven :* therefore the Lord hides not himself, as though he were unwilling to be known, but he desireth to be known by us, he bids us seek his face ; therefore if we do not know the Lord, the cause is not in God,

God, but in our selves, that we are not willing to know him, nor desirous of his acquaintance.

Objc^t. 7. Ignorant persons are ready further to object and say, What though we be ignorant? yet God is a mercifull God, and his mercie is over all his works, and therefore we hope to find mercy from God: notwithstanding, he that made us, will surely save us.

Resp. Let such poor souls see what the Prophet *Isai. 27. 11.* *Isaias* saith to them, *It is a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them, will shew them no favour: if thou art ignorant under the means of knowledge; thou art wilfully ignorant, therefore he that made thee, will not save thee, &c. God will not be mercifull to men because they are ignorant, what then will he do to them? you may read it at large. Prov. 1. 3. 1.* *For that they hated knowledge, and did not chuse the feare of the Lord, they would none of my counsell, they despised all my reproof, therefore shall they eat the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.*

But they are ready farther to say, Christ dyed, and we hope to have some benefit by the death of Jesus Christ, for he came into the world to save sinners.

I answer, No. You are like to have no benefit by his death, if you abide in ignorance;

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rance; this is the condemnation, That light came into the world, and men love darknesse rather then light: men that are in love with darknesse and ignorance shall be condemned.

If you shall yet say further, that the Apostle saith, that God would have all men to be saved, 1 Tim. 2. 4. then take in the next word following, *And come to the knowledge of the truth*; so that all those that will not come to the knowledge of the truth; there is no hope of their salvation: I may say, that God wills not their salvation, that never come to the knowledge of the truth. But yet they hope Christ will not condemne them for their ignorance; To that purpose consider what the Apostle saith, 2 Thes. 1. 7, 8. *That the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God*; let every man then take heed of this sin of ignorance, for it is a most dangerous sin.

Many there are that if you tell them of *Object. 8.* the danger of ignorance will be ready to object and say, yet further, What became of all our fore-fathers? they lived and dyed in ignorance, and yet we hope they are saved, and it were a great breach of charity; yea, great inhumanity, for us to think the contrary.

We are not to trouble our heads, What became of our forefathers, but we are to look *Resp.* what

Cypr.lib.
2. Epist. 3.

Doctor
Sanders
Serm in
Gen. 20. 6.

what God now requires at our hand ; let us leave them to the Lord to whom they stand or fall , and let us (to whom God hath vouchsafed greater light , and more meanes of knowledge) look to it that we walk as children of the light : Cyprian speaks well to this purpose , *If my Predecessors (saith he) either by ignorance , or by simplicitie , have not kept and holden that which our Lord hath taught them by his example and authority , the mercy of the Lord might pardon them , but (saith he) we cannot hope for the like , having better meanes of instruction then they had.*

And a learned Divine of ours hath well observed a vast “ difference, between their
“ estate and thine , between thine ignorance, and theirs: they had but a small
“ enjoyment of the light of Gods word,
“ hid from them under two bushells, under the bushell of a Tyrannous Popish
“ Clergy , that if any man should be able
“ to understand the books he should not
“ have them, and under the bushel of an unknown tongue , that if any one should
“ chance to get the books he might not understand them : whereas to thee, the
“ light is holden forth , it is set on a table,
“ and on a candlestick , the books are
“ open , the language is plaine, easie
“ and familiar, they had eyes but saw not,
“ because the light was kept from them;
and

and the land was dark, about them, as the
 darknesse of Egypt : but thou livest as in a
 Goshen, where the light incompasseth thee
 in on all sides, where there are burning
 and shining lights in every corner of the
 Land ; therefore thy blindnesse is greater,
 and more inexcusable ; for who so blind,
 as he that will not see ? They wanted the
 light, thou skunest the light : they lived
 in darknesse, thou delighest in darkenesse :
 their ignorance was simple, thine is wilful
 and affected ; therefore though the times
 of their ignorance God winked at, yet thou
 hast no ground to presume that God will
 wink at thee, who rejectest the counsel of
 God against thine own soul : thus he :
Many things, saith Austin, were tollerable a-
mongst them, which now are not ; because, saith
he, many things are tolerated in the darknesse,
and dawning, which are not in the day when
the Sun is up : The time of this ignorance God
winked at ; but now God calls upon every man,
every where, to repent.

Act. 17. 30

You will say then, What shall we do to
 get knowledge ? *Quest.*

If you would attain to the true knowledge
 of God, labour to discover and finde out
 your ignorance, and be sensible of it : when
 a man is sick, the Physitian laboureth first
 to find out, and to discover the Disease, be-
 fore he can give any directions for the cure
 thereof : *Resp. 1.*
Harpaste
nescit esse
cacam: sub-
inde pade-
gogum suum
rogat, ut
migret ait,

*domum esse
tenebro-
sam.* Seneca,
Epist.
51. ad Lu-
cium.

thereof: So in this spiritual Disease, you must first discover and find out your ignorance. The state of one *spiritually* blind, is much worse than of one *naturally* blind; for he that is bodily blind, will commonly be led by some body, his servant, wife, dog, &c. but the *spiritually* blind, is commonly misled by the world, the flesh, and the devil.

1. The *bodily* blind will have a seeing guide, but the *spiritually* blind followeth his own lusts, which be *blind guides*, like *Ahab's* false Prophets, and *Rehoboam's* young Counsellors, and so both fall into the ditch, and danger, as *Math. 15. 14.*

Genes. 27.
21.

2. The *bodily* blind, will acknowledge his want of sight, and desire to supply it by some other sense, as *Isaac* did; but the *spiritually* blind, will not be perswaded, but that they see purely and perfectly. Thus the Pharisees, when Christ told them, that for judgement he was come into this world, that they which see not might see, and that they which see, might be made blind; they said unto him, *What, are we blind also?* So Christ tells *Laodicea*, That she was blind, but yet she knew not, that she was so.

Joh. 9. 40,
41.

Rev. 3 17.

*Multi ad
sapientiam
pervenis-
sent, nisi se
putassent
jam perve-
nisse.*
Seneca.

3. The *bodily* blind account it a great happiness to see, but the *spiritually* blind despise the Seers. Have we not great reason then to labour to be sensible of this our spiritual blindness? Many men, saith

an

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an Heathen, might have attained to much wisdom, had they not thought themselves to have had wisdom enough already: As those men will never come to the Physitian to be healed, of any malady, which think not themselves to be sick; so there are no people more unapt to be taught, and to be enlightned by God unto salvation, than those which think they understand, and know as much as any can teach them, and that they see of themselves, when they are altogether ignorant, and overwhelmed in darknesse. The first Lesson a good Christian, that would attain heavenly wisdom, should learn, is, To deny his own wisdom: If any man will be wise, saith the Apostle, let him become a fool, that he may be wise; a man must become a fool, in respect of his own wisdom, and become a fool for Christs sake; and the more of the true wisdom a man hath, the more he is sensible of his ignorance: thus Agur cries out; Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man, I neither leained wisdom, nor have the knowledg of the holy; or know the knowledge of the holy: according to the Hebrew: have you any sparke of this knowledge in you? have mean thoughts thereof. The first step to folly, is for a man to believe himself to be wise: the second step is to professe himself to be so, saith a Wise man: If thou wert truly wise, thou wouldst not think or say so of thy self. Agur was a man

In ipsis san-
ctis Scrip-
turis multo
nesciam
plura quara
sciam.
August.
Epist. 119.

1 Cor. 3.
18.

Initium
scientia est,
scire quod
nescias.
Fulgenc.
lib. My-
tholog.

Prov. 30.
23.

Credere se
sapientem
primus ad
stultitiam
gradus, pro-
ximus est
profiteri.
Petrar. de
remed. u-
triusque
fortuna.

fall

full of heavenly wisdom, and yet he saith, *Surely I am more brutish than any man, &c.* It were very well, if there were as many knowing men in the World, as there are professors of wisdom and knowledge; the wiser any man is, the more he understandeth his want of true wisdom and knowledge; he doth not boast of it, but more and more breaths after it; if thou wilt be wise, do not think thy self to be so.

Object. I. Oh! but I am accounted and esteemed by others to be a wise and knowing man.

Resp. It is not thy tongue, nor the voices of others that have made thee wise; but the thing it self: do not rest upon the vulgar opinion concerning thy self: the common people do use to account wise men to be mad men, and mad men to be wise, taking false things for true, and true for false; there is nothing more remote from vertue, and from the truth many times, than the opinion of the vulgar; people are very apt to rely upon other mens opinions concerning themselves. Wilt thou know whether thou art wise? turn thine eyes backward, remember how often thou hast gone astray, how often thy feet have stumbled; *quot dolenda, quot pudenda, quot penitenda commiseris, how many things thou hast committed that are to be lamented, that thou art to be ashamed of, that*
thou

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thou hast cause to repent of; and then call thy self a wise man, if thou darest.

But I have gotten much knowledge, and am able to discourse knowingly and wisely, and therefore I know that I am wise. *Object. 2*

It is one thing to speak wisely, it is another thing to live wisely; It is one thing to be accounted, another thing to be a truly wise man. The Romans do pronounce Lolius and Cato for wise men, and Græcia when it flourished, is said to have had seven wise men; now these men did not assume this title to themselves; but possessed it, being given to them by the erring people; and there was but one Epicurus that was wise in his own judgement, and he was the veriest fool of all: and those wise men before mentioned, notwithstanding all their wisdom, were ignorant of God; for so saith the Apostle, the world by wisdom knew not God. *Resp. Aliud est sapienter loqui. aliud sapienter vivere.*

1 Cor. 1,
21.

Labour to find out the cause of thy ignorance: It is not enough to find out a Disease, but also to find out the cause thereof is most requisite: examine thy self how thou camest to be thus spiritually blind: the blind man in the Gospel could tell that he was borne blind; This I know, saith he, that once I was blind; enquire then (being once sensible of thy blindness) why thou dost continue in thy blindness? Surely the main cause is, because thou hast not all this while gone to the *Direct. 2.*

Joh. 9. 1

the Physitian for eye-salve, to cure thy blindnesse, Jesus Christ is the great Physitian of Souls, and he would have cured thy blindnesse, if thou wouldest have gone unto him.

Direct. 3.

Revel. 3.

18.

*Nisi sit in-
tus Spiri-
tus qui do-
ceat, nil
valet do-
ctoris lin-
gua. Au-
gust.*

*Cathedram
in Caelis
habet, qui
corda docet.
Hominis est
monere, sed
solius Dei
corda mo-
vere.*

Macarius.

1 Joh. 2.

20.

Go to Jesus Christ, and beg of him this eye-salve; beg of him that he will annoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see. Physitians say this eye-salve is an ointment to purge away all filth and fluxes, and ophthalmies out of the eyes, that they may clearly see; pray to him to make the scales of ignorance fall from thine eyes: buy of him this eye-salve, as he adviseth *Laodicea*; by buying, we can understand nothing but begging; for what price can we pay to procure this rich purchase? Seeing therefore we are in our selves, either stone-blind, the light of grace being quite extinguished, or at the least blear-eyed, the light of nature being eclipsed and obscured, so that we cannot know the things that behooove us, and belong to our peace: Have we not then great reason to sue to Jesus Christ the Heavenly Chirurgeon, for the true eye-salve, viz. the enlightning of his Spirit? and therefore it is called an *Unction from the Holy One*, where by we know all things. If your eyes are annointed with this eye-salve, your knowledge will be more clear than other mens, you will see most clearly into Divine Mysteries, like a man that seeth at noon-day: your know-
ledge

ledge of God likewise will be more sure, and more experimental; you will see the creatures emptinesse, Christs fulnesse, sins misery, and graces excellency; you will know how Christ was formed in you, and how you have conceived him in your heart, you will know the powerful and influential workings of the Spirit upon your souls. You will then have such a distinct knowledge of Gods Promises, as to be able with comfort to apply them to your own souls; *The inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding: then shall the eyes of the blind see out of darknesse*, Esay 29. 18. The blind world walkes in the darke shadow of death, and is not acquainted with this Heavenly light. Pray to the Lord with David, *Lord open mine eyes, that I may see the wondrous things out of thy Law: pray (as Paul doth for the Colossians) that your knowledge may abound in all wisdom: pray to God likewise, to open the Scriptures to you, as well as your understandings; for the Gospel is a Mystery which hath been hid from Ages and Generations, but is now made manifest to his Saints, saith the Apostle: It is sacrum secretum, as Lyra, a holy secret; or sublime arcanum, as Calvin, Rom. 16. 25. Ephes. 1. 9. Eph. 3. 9. Col. 2. 2, 3. 1 Tim. 3. 16.*

Gal. 4. 19.

Job 32. 8.

Psal. 119. 18.

Col. 1. 9.

1. In which places it is said sometime to be hidden in God; because it was kept close in his secret purpose and eternal counsell.

K

2. Some

2. Sometimes hidden in Christ, because he was the Store-house in which was laid up, all the Treasures of wisdom and knowledge, all those Treasures that concerned our eternal happiness and salvation, *Col. 2. 3.* as also, because he was the meritorious cause of it.

3. Sometimes hidden in the Word, because that is the Fountain wherein it is contained, whence the knowledge thereof is derived and conveyed to us.

4. Hidden from the Gentiles, for the space of many hundreds of years, and before their illumination, by the light of the Gospel, and all the while they served dumb Idols, and had not the glorious Sun of Righteousness shining to them.

5. Hidden from the Jews themselves comparatively, and respectively, because it was revealed to them, but under shadows, types, and figures, darkly, and dimly: the Promises and Prophecies were not so easie to be understood, as now they be. Pray then to the Lord to open your understandings, that hath the key of *David*, that in some measure you may be able to comprehend Divine Mysteries, that they may not be as a sealed book unto you, *Esay 29. 9, 10, 11.* Pray further with *David*, Teach me O Lord thy way, and I will walk in thy truth. As God hath set a course to the Heavens with all their Hosts, the Sun, Moon, and all the Stars, and as he hath

Eph. 4. 17,
18.

*Mysterium
hoc duplex.
1. de mit-
tendo Chri-
sto in gene-
re. 2. de
vocatione
gentium in
specie, &
quid his
præclariss.
Zanch.*

Psal. 86. 11

hath set the Sea his bounds, which he must not passe, without his permission, yea special injunction ; So he hath not left man at liberty to do what he listeth, but hath appointed him a way to walk in, instructing him in the knowledge of himself : this appeareth, in that presently after he had made our first Parents, *Adam* and *Eve*, he gave them divers directions, how to order and carry themselves

1. By sanctifying a Sabbath, and resting from their labours the seventh day, as God did from his, *Genes.* 2. 2, 3.

2. By dressing and keeping the Garden, *Genes.* 2. 15.

3. By abstaining from, and not meddling with, the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, *Genes.* 2. 17. Then after their Fall, and expulsion out of Paradise, he taught them how to worship him, and serve him ; which instructions (doubtlesse) he imparted to his posterity : else what can we imagine should move his sons *Cain* and *Abel*, to offer sacrifice : and afterwards he instructed *Noah*, before the coming of the Flood, to prepare an Ark wherein to preserve himself and Family, with a certain number of all kind of creatures , whereby the species and kinds might be preserved, and the world renewed, *Genes.* 6. 14. *ad finem*. Then after the Flood, he instructeth them , what they should eat, and from what they should abstain,

Gen. 4.

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Genes. 9. 3, 4. Afterwards he instructeth Abraham, and gives him as it were an Epitome or abridgement of his whole worship and service, saying, *I am God Almighty, walke before me, and be perfect,* *Genesis*, 17. 1. Again, in the same Chapter, he gives him particular instructions concerning Circumcision, and in divers other places about other matters: and thus in a continued Series, Rank, and Succession, he hath from time to time, taught his people; first by *Moses*, and afterwards by his other Prophets, as he tells us, *Hosea* 8. 12. So *Micah* 6. 8. *He hath shewed thee O man what is good, and what the Lord doth require of thee, &c.* Now, if any one shall demand, where this duty is shewed, he may finde it, *Deut.* 10. 12, 13. You see then that from the beginning, man hath not been left to himself, but been instructed by God in the way, wherein he should go.

Direc^t. 4. Be conversant in the Scriptures, which are the rules of knowledge; he that will be a Physitian must learn the precepts that teach Physick, he that will be a Musitian must learn the rules of Musick; the Oratour must learn the rules of Rhetorick, the Plough-man the rules of husbandry, and so every man the rules of his profession, or else he shall never be a proficient in his Art or Science, nor be accounted a Crafts-man, that

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is ignorant of the principles of his Craft; even so no man can attain to the practice of those duties that belong to a Christian, that is ignorant of the rules of the Word: *he that is ignorant of the Scriptures, is ignorant of Christ*, saith *Hierome*: It is a most happy ignorance (saith *Hilary*) which rather deserves reward then pardon, when a man trusteth to the Scriptures in that he cannot comprehend: therefore let me exhort you to study to read the Scriptures, they are able to make you wise unto salvation. 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. read them frequently: it is recorded of *Alphonso* King of *Spain*, that he read over the Bible, with *Lyra's* glosse and notes upon it fourteen times, notwithstanding his other employments; and of *Anthony* an *Egyptian* Monke, of whom *Austine* in his first book *de doctrina Christianâ*, saith, that though he had no learning, yet by often hearing the Scriptures read, and meditating upon what he heard, he learned much of them without book, and attained a competent measure of understanding and knowledge: *Chrysostome* thus exhorts the people of *Antioch*, *Get ye Bibles, the Physick of your soules, read them often, for there you may find a salve for every sore, a medicine for every spiritual malady: here is the bread of life that must feed our hungry souls; here is the light that must direct and guide us in the way to heaven, as Bishop Cranmer in his Preface before the Bible.*

Qui Scripturam ignorant, Christum ignorat.
Hieron. prefat. in Isaiam.

August. lib. 1. de doctr. Christ. Dom. 5. post. Epiph.

Comparate vobis Biblia, animarum pharmacum.
Chrysost. homil. ad pop. Antioch.

Hieron.
epist. ad
Paulin.
Singuli li-
bri, singula
fercula,
Ambros. of-
fic. lib. 1.
cap. 22.

The Book of God is the treasure of know-
ledge, as Hieron speaks : *Convivium sapien-*
tiae, a banquet of wisdom, so many books, so
many messes: the Scriptures are (saith Do-
ctor Sutton) like to *Tagus* in *Lustania*, or
Ganges in *India*, which the Scripture calleth
Pishon, whose very sand and gravell is gold;
but when an ignorant man seeks Christ in
them, he falls into many Labyrinths (like
the *Jewes*) and loseth himself : when he
should feast at this table, his meat becomes
his poyson, the savour of it killeth him, be-
cause it is the savour of death to him, when
he seeks for gold, he is blind-folded, and
falls into a pit, for the vaile is over his face.
2 Cor. 3.5. that which should be his Pilot, is
like an *ignis fatuus*, to seduce & mislead him;
most men desire to be conversant in those Au-
thours, that treat of good arguments, for the
ripening of their knowledge, and therefore
many are delighted in history, which doubt-
lesse is a very commendable study; and the
more comendable, if men propound to them-
selve, the Acts of these famous and honou-
rable personages, of whom they read not on-
ly to be admired, but also to be imitated,
and followed, as occasion shall be offered:
Some men are so given to the search of an-
tiquity, and finding out of nice quirks, and
quaint distinctions, as they will take infinite
toile, to read Manuscripts, and rude dunsti-
call Writers, whereby they have lost even the

the

the habit of writing, and speaking handsomely themselves : others again, are so delighted and carried away, with a delicate smooth phrase, and fluent stile, as they will vouchsafe even to read most obscene Authors, for their matter good for nothing, but for the dung-hill; to learn a good phrase, and composition of speech. Now if you desire both excellent matter, and eloquent words, then read the Scriptures diligently, and when you have so done, tell me what learning there lacketh ? To begin with that which every one makes most reckoning and account of, and (how deservedly I will not dispute) I mean the Law; if ever thou meanest to be a good Lawyer, have recourse to the Law of God, the ground of all humane Lawes; and observe what Lawes were moral, and perpetual, binding all people at all places at all times ? what ceremonial, concerning the Jews till the coming of Christ, and what judicial, free either to be observed or let alone, according to the discretion of every Law-giver, and the state of his Countrey, whereto he gives or makes Laws; in the knowledge of all these, the Books of Moses will furnish thee ; Secondly, if thou art not of such an aspiring spirit, but canst as well be contented to wear a rugge gown, as a velvet Jacket ; and dost esteem more thy mind than thy body, and therefore thou hast set up thy rest to be a Philosopher, then

*The Scripture
made men
wile y^e know
edges of all
humane
Learning*

do but say, what part thou art addicted to, and there it's ready for thee : if moral Philosophy, read the book of the *Proverbs* : if natural Philosophy, read the book of *Ecclesiastes*, and some Chapters of *Jeb* : if the Metaphysicks, read the book of the *Canticles*, or if thou wilt be an Antiquary, there thou mayest find what was done, as soon as any thing was done : the age of the world, the time of the flood, the destruction of *Sodom*, the time of the *Israelites* going down to *Egypt*, and coming up again, their being carried into *Babylon*; the time of their abode there, and coming back again, or if you desire to see the Acts of good and bad Kings; the diversity of Gods dealing with them, the books of the *Kings* and *Chronicles*, will give you full satisfaction : in a word, if you will make but the Law of God contained in the Scriptures, the Looking-glasse of your lives, you should be thoroughly furnished, both how to speak, and how to live : therefore for the obtaining of all kind of most excellent knowledge; it is most necessary to read the holy Scriptures : this made *David* wiser then his Teachers, wiser then the Ancients (old men are presumed to be the wisest) and wiser then his enemies.

Object.

Oh but some will object and say, the Scriptures wherein is contained the knowledge of God and Christ, are in many places

very

very difficult, and hard to be understood; *Which men that are unlearned, and unstable,* 2 Pet. 3. 38
are apt to wrest to their own destruction. We are ignorant, and cannot understand them.

Let no man object his simplicity, as if that thereby he were uncapable of knowing the Mysteries of Gods Kingdom, our Saviour tells us, that he *hideth these things from the* Resp.
subtill, and openeth them to the simple. Mat. II. 25,

2. Let not the seeming difficulty of the Scriptures keep thee from reading and studying them; you have heard, it gives wisdom to the simple; and *David* tells us further, the Commandement of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes, he doth not say it blindeth them that read it, and could see before, it enlighteneth them that were blind before: Psal. 19. 9.
Some say, of the *Beryl*, a certain pretious stone, that it hath an especiall vertue to preserve the eye-sight; whether this be so, or no, I know not: but this I am sure, that the word of God is both a light to our eyes and to our feet; yea, though we sit in darknesse, and in in the shadow of death, yet it will give us both spiritual light, and life, guiding our feet into the way of peace. *Gregory* tells us, that the Scriptures are in some places so deep, that an Elephant may swim, and in other places so shallow, as a Lamb may wade: and *Austin* tells us, in some places it is plain and easie, that the simple might love it, and in others hard and obscure, lest the
subtill

Greg. in Ezek. 47. *

*Que aliis
locis ob-
scure & am-
bigue tra-
duntur, in
aliis plane
& perspicue
explican-
tur, Basil.*

subtill might loath it; some places are hard and difficult to exercise the learned, and others are easie to allure the unlearned to the study of them: and *Basil* saith, that those things which in some places; are obscurely and doubtfully delivered, are in other places plainly and pespiciously explained.

John 8.47

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All things needful and necessary to be known to salvation, are so revealed, as they may be understood in the Scriptures, or if there be any hardnesse, it is either in the hearts of the readers, or hearers, rather then either in the words or matter of Scripture. And *Chrysostom* tells us, that it's very probable, that therefore the Scriptures were penned, by Publicans, Fisher-men, Tent-makers, Shepherds, and Neat. herds, to the end that Artificers, Housholders, Plough-men, Widowes, Boyes and Girles, and unlearned women might read, and understand them.

Col. 1.9.

3. It is a duty commanded by God, that thou shouldest study the Scriptures, and be filled with the knowledge of Gods will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; as it is vanity to enquire into what God hath not revealed, so it is great unthankfulnesse, tot to study the Scriptures, which were written for our learning, as *Paul* saith.

Rom. 15. 4

Object.

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Object. But our adversaries, and the enemies of Scripture will tell us, that Hereticks abuse the Scripture.

Resp. If any do abuse the Scriptures, the fault is in themselves, not in the Scripture, there is nothing but wholesome food, unlesse thou (spider-like) by ill apprehension, or mis-application turn it into poison, and what if hereticks do abuse the Scriptures; must Christians therefore be afraid to meddle with them? because wine and strong drink are abused by some, must they therefore be used by none? because the Sun sometime hurteth sore eyes, shall none have liberty to look upon it?

Be diligent in hearing the word preacht, Direct. 5.
wait at wisdoms gates: by hearing the word preacht, we are prepared for the knowledge of God: *Encline your eares to hear, and your hearts to understand; be swift to hear, as James speaks, it is the property of a wise man to hear; a wise man will hear; and increase learning: the Queen of Sheba came a great way to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and yet many now adayes will not go from their houses to hear the wisdom of a wiser then Solomon. What shall we say to such as think themselves wise enough already, they know as much as their Minister can teach them? Solomon saith, there is more hope of a fool, of a simple fool, then of such proud fooles:* *Prov. 1.5.*
let *Prov. 26. 12.*

let them not be offended, to be so stiled, for Gods Dictionary affords them no better titles; there is a great necessity of hearing the word preacht, we must first hear, before

we come to see: *As we have heard, so we have seen*, saith the Prophet, We lost much of our knowledge, by not hearkening to the Lord, and we must recover it again by obedient hearing of it: by hearing, we learn how to help our eye-sight, that the eye being made clear, it may see the Lord, whom it cannot see so long as it is troubled: Gregory Nyssen hath this observation, saying, that Moses of set purpose caused the Hebrews to wear Ear-rings, giving them thereby to understand, that their beauty and grace was in an obedient ear.

Psal. 48. 8.
Sanctus itaque
auditus
oculum qui
turbatus
est, ut seve-
nus videat,
quem tur-
batus non
potuit,
Bein.
Cant.
Serm.
48.

Direc. 6. If thou wouldest attain to the knowledge of God, take heed of vain curiosity in searching after the knowledge of those things that are too high, and too wonderfull for thee, in earthly kingdoms, there be, *mysteria regis*, which it is better many times to be ignorant of, then to know, as he knew well, that being come to the Court of a great King, being asked by the King what he should do for him, told him that his desire was to know none of his secrets: indeed there are some, *mysteria Dei*, that are, *inscrutabilia*, as Job 11. 7, 8, 9. Canst thou by searching find out the Almighty to perfection? It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do?

Non possum
unum cogi-
tare, quin
trium ful-
gore con-
fundor, nec
tria possum
dicere, quin
subito ad
unum refe-
ror. Greg.
Nazian.

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do? deeper than hell, what canst thou know? the measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the Sea: there be many things in the nature of God, as we cannot find out, as also concerning the subsistence of three Persons in one entire Essence, of which *Justin Martyr* saith, he would believe it was so, because the Scripture taught and told him so; but how it should be so, he could neither himself find, nor would he have others too *curiously* to search: but though there be some *mysteria regis*, that cannot clearly be known, yet there are *mysteria regni*, and these are necessary to be known: To you it is given to know the mysteries of the *Luk. 8. 10.* kingdom of heaven, saith Christ to his Disciples: things revealed are for us, and for our children. It pleaseth God out of his goodness to propound many things touching the knowledge of himself to be believed, and not questioned, which notwithstanding might naturally be known.

Why are those things that cannot be *Quest.* searcht out by reason, propounded to be believed by faith.

Because man is ordained to higher mat- *Resp. 1.* ters, than he can naturally know, and no man will desire or study for what he knows not; therefore it is necessary that we believe, what we cannot naturally know of God. Spiritual and eternal things do in-
tellectum

telleſtum noſtrum excedere; to theſe we are ordained, therefore we muſt believe them: and it helpeth to the true knowledge of God; for we never know God truly, till we know him to ſurpaſſe whatſoever we can know or think of him.

2. Becauſe otherwiſe, every man would teach and maintain what ſeemed true to himſelf. This confuteth the error of *Simoniſdes*, who ſaid, that it did *decere hominem humanatantum, & mortalem mortalia ſapere*. Now the truth of faith and reaſon are not contrary one to another.

1. The verity of Chriſtian Faith, exceedeth that of humane reaſon, but it is not contrary to it, faith *Aquinas*, the reaſon is, becauſe nothing is contrary to truth, but falſhood; therefore whatſoever things are known true naturally, they cannot be contrary to Divine truth.

2. The ſame teacher will not teach contrary Doctrine, eſpecially ſuch a teacher as God is: but God taught thoſe things that are naturally known; therefore they are not contrary to thoſe things that are known by a ſupernatural revelation, and received by Faith.

3. God would not be the Author of contrary knowledges, and theſe would hinder the one the other, whereas they do not hinder, but help rather: therefore the knowledge or verity of faith, cannot be contrary.

to the verity of reason: Indeed many mysteries of faith do exceed reason, but are not contrary to it; and therefore whatsoever is brought out of natural reason, against the documents of faith, it cannot be of the nature of infallible demonstrations, but meer cavils and sophistications. *Duplex est veritas divinorum,* There is a double verity of things divine, the one our reason may reach, the other it cannot, that it may reach is probable, the other demonstrative; the one we must prove by the other: *Sicuti minus nota per notiora,* As things lesse known, by things more known: by the books of holy Scriptures, by the books of old Philosophers, and by miracles; The first book considereth God simply in himself; the second the creatures, as they proceed from him; the third, as they are again referred to him.

Illud quidem quod veritas patet facit libris V. five N. Testamenti, nullo modo potest adversum esse. Ergo. August. Naturalia mutari non possunt, & contraria opiniones eadem inesse non possunt.

Be not then too curious in searching after hidden secrets concerning God: Curiosity (saith a learned man) makes more offendours in prison, then learned in Schooles, and ever the desire to know what God would have hidden, is paid with ignorance of ones self: The Statue of Curiosity is on a moving Globe; what more inconstant? it is full of wings, what lighter? its sprinkled all over with eyes, what more watchful? its filled with ears, what more industrious in the discovery of things? it hath a mouth perpetually open, for is is no sooner filled by the eares, but emptied by the mouth: its lodging

Nich. Cause. sin. holy court.

lodging is at the sign of the Vacuum, for what is more vain? its attire is spiders webs, what more frivolous? its table and viands is smoke, what more slender and hungry? her officers are many liars and impostours, for such people are its favourits: before it a certain itch of knowledge goes, for it is the ordinary messenger thereof; at her right hand stands opinion, for it is it that deceives her; at the left tattle, 'tis that which instructeth her; after her followeth disturbance of spirit, ignorance, and misery, for it is his inheritance in the end: Thus he. I shall conclude this with that of Augustine; Faithful ignorance, saith he, is better than rash knowledge.

Melior est fidelis ignorantia quam temeraria scientia.
Aug. in verb. Apost. serm. 20.

Direct. 7.

Marcella à Hieronymo saepe quarebat, non ut contenderet, sed ut quarendo disceret earum questionum solutiones quas opponi posse intelligebat.
Hieron. in procem. Epist. ad Galat.

Art thou ignorant? do not conceale thy ignorance, but discover it. A man that is ignorant, and yet thinks he hath no need of the counsel of others, is no better than a beast among men: If thou readest the Scriptures, and canst not understand without an interpreter, go to Ministers, or experienced Christians, to any that are learned in Gods Word, to know the meaning of it, as men do to Lawyers in difficult Law-cases to be resolved by them: God gives more knowledge to some than to others, that they might as Conduit pipes, pour out to others. It was the practise of the Disciples in many things wherein they were ignorant, to come to Christ, and desire to be instructed by him: as *Math. 13. 36.* they say unto him,

Declare

Declare to us the Parable of the tares : and Marke 9. 11. Why say the Scribes, that Elias must first come ? So likewise Nicodemus saith, How can these things be ? Joh. 3. 9. So the Eunuch to Philip, Of whom speaks the Prophet this, of himself, or of another ? Act. 8. 34. When you read and hear the word, and study and meditate upon it, and yet remain ignorant in many points, have recourse then to your Minister, and Gods Messenger, whose mouth the Prophet tells you, must preserve knowledge ; you must seek the Law at his mouth. This *Austin* tells us, was one cause, why some things in the Scriptures were so hard ; that we may rather shew diligence of enquiring, than rashnesse of affirming. *Pythagoras* saith, that those were the best of his Schollers, and the greatest Proficients in knowledge, that were the most inquisitive, and askt the most questions. Yet such is the sottishnesse of many people, that they will remain grossely ignorant in many things, rather than they will ask questions to betray their ignorance. Sick persons are not ashamed to tell the Physitian what their Disease is ; neither is it good to hide ignorance, but to bring it forth that it may be healed, saith *Heraclitus* : when *John Baptist's* disciples were infected with envy, and repined at Christ, that he should out-strip and excell their Master with the people, as is evident by the complaint they make, *Joh. 3. 26.* where they come unto him,

L

say-

Ut diligenter
præstemus in-
quirendi
potius,
quam te-
meritatem
affirmandi.
August.

ἵνα ἀμα-
ρηνήσονται
τὸν ἀμαρ-
νον, ὡς φη-
σὶν,
Ἡράκλει-
τος· ἀλλ'
ἐκ μέσον
τιθέναι καὶ
θεραπεύ-
ειν.
Heracl,

saying, Rabbi, or Master, *He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, and baptizedst, behold now he baptizeth more than thou, and all men come unto him*: Hereby the holy Baptist perceiving them to be infected with ignorance and infidelity, he sends them to school to Christ, to correct their ignorance, that they might hear the words of his wisdom; to correct their incredulity, they might see his Works of wonder: therefore two of his disciples are sent to Christ with this question: *Art thou he that should come, or shall we waite for another?* Some think that *John Baptist* moveth this doubt on the behalf of himself; but this could not be: for first, *John Baptist* could not be so incredulous, but believe what was testified by God the Father from Heaven at his Baptism: *This is my well beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.* Yea he testified of him before he baptized him, and had born this testimony, *That he was not worthy to carry his shoes after him.* and again; *Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.* Now *John Baptist* could not doubt of Christ, and give such large testimony of him; nor was *John* inconstant and unsettled, *like a reed shaken with the wind*, as our Saviour testifieth of him. Thus *Elisha* knew, and was assured, that his Master *Elias* was taken up into Heaven, and yet for the satisfaction of the children of the Prophets in that point, he is at last

Luk. 7. 19.

Mat. 3. 17.

Mat. 3. 11.

Joh. 1. 29.

last
to se
mou
disc
leav
son
resp
ther
to b
be f
he v
that
per
God
not
and
solu
the
Thu
Peo
him
nor
him
stio
mac
or t
ther
Jon
thit
Ma
but
abo

last contented, that they shall send *fifty men* to seek him by the space of *three dayes* in the mountains : So *John Baptist*, knowing his disciples to be too much infected with the leaven of the Scribes and Pharisees, by reason of their too much familiarity and correspondence that they had one with the other ; he sendeth them therefore to Christ, to be better instructed, and that they might be satisfied, both concerning his person, that he was true man, their eyes telling them, that he had the dimensions and natural properties of a true humane body ; and true God too, working such wonders as could not be done, without the finger of God ; and also for his office, that he was a most absolute Physician, both of body and soul, yea the very *Messiah* and Saviour of the World. Thus the Publicans, the Souldiers, and the People, come to *John Baptist*, and say to him, *Master what shall we do ?* being ignorant they come with a desire to learn of him ; and here they ask a profitable question : they ask not what God did before he made the World ? what *Pharaohs* Daughter, or the *Queen of Sheba's* names were ? whether *Solomon* was saved or not ? whether *Jonas* were ever at *Nineveh* before he went thither to preach ? whether ever the *Virgin Mary* had any more children than Christ ? but they go plainly to the point, to enquire about a matter needful for them to know :

2 Kings 2: 17.

Luk. 3. 10, 12, 14.

What shall we do to avoid the wrath, and enjoy the favour of God?

*Etiamsi scien-
tes magis
deceat discere,
quam
discere; ma-
gis tamen
deceat discere,
quam
ignorare.
Gregor.*

*Prov. 13.
20.*

*Math. 11.
19.*

Dir. 8.

Psal. 16. 7.

Thus you see it is our duty, not to conceale, but to discover our ignorance: To this purpose, one of the Ancients hath a good saying; *Albeit it becometh old men rather to be teachers than learners, yet it is more comely for them to learn, than to be ignorant.* If a Minister be well seen in Physick, or in the Law, his house shall be frequented and made *oraculum civitatis*; but for Divinity, few will trouble him: which sheweth, that men have more care of their bodies and goods, than of their souls. Let me entreate you to frequent much the company of those that are godly-wise, such as have the true knowledge of God and Christ in them; he that walketh with wise men, shall be wise, saith Solomon, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed. The Queen of Sheba pronouned Solomons servants happy, which continually stood before him to hear his wisdom: though wisdom be condemned by the foolish world for madnesse, yet wisdom is justified, or commended of her children. Associate thy self with the godly-wise, and thou also shalt become more wise.

If thou hast any small measure of knowledge, be thankful for that little: I will blesse the Lord who hath given me counsel, saith David; if thou hast received any glimpse of the saving knowledge of God in Christ, then blesse

blesse the Lord who hath given thee counsell, and made thee to understand aright: he that is thankful for a little, shall have more. It is just with God to suffer their understandings to be darkened, who are not thankful for the light. It is charged upon the Heathens, that *when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened: Unthankfulness for light received, makes way for darknesse, blindnesse, and ignorance.* Rom. 1. 21

Labour to be humble and poor in spirit, *Direct. 9.* he hath promised to teach the humble, *Psal. 25. 9.* with the lowly there is wisdom, *God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble; he fills the hungry with good things; Pride keeps a* Prov. 11. 2. Jam. 4. 8. Luk. 1. 53. man farre from God, and makes him unfit to come near him, that which brings a man near is humility, without humility it may be said to us, as *Didimus* said to proud *Alexander*, that *we want vessels to receive Gods gifts and graces*: for as full vessels will hold no more liquor, so a soul stuffed with pride, and vain glory, cannot receive in, nor hold Gods gifts & graces: the proud shut their windows, and will not receive in the light of saving knowledge: God is not so prodigal of his grace, as to cast it in upon those that are not willing to entertain it; heavenly mysteries are hid from the prudent, but revealed unto babes. *This is a wonder of humility,* *Hoc est humilitatis miraculum ut elatio deorsum, humilitas sursum rendat.* Aug. de Civit. 4. Dei. lib. 1. cap. 13.

(saith *Augustine*) that pride tends downward: , humility upwards: the more true knowledge a man hath, the more he is sensible of his want of knowledge; and that which he hath, is nothing to what he wants:

Quest. Now peradventure some may step in and ask me, what shall we do with our knowledge, having attained to a competent measure thereof?

Resp. I shall shew you what is to be done with it.

Direct. 1

Rom. 2. 20

Aliud est habere legem

Dei in cor-

de. Aliud

habere cor

in lege;

legem in

corde ha-

bent, qui

veritatem

sciunt, cor

in lege ha-

bent, qui

veritatem

diligunt.

As you know what to do, so now you must *do what you know*: put in practice what you know. In Paradise there was a *Tree of Life*, as well as a *Tree of Knowledge*; and as one saith well; *One apple of the Tree of Life, is worth twenty of the Tree of Knowledge.* We read in Scripture that there is a *form of Knowledge*, as well a *form of godliness*: *A form of knowledge* is nothing else but an *Idæa* of truth floating in the brain, that hath no influence on the heart or life; like a Winters Sun which shines, but warms not: knowledge is as the eyes to direct us, practice as the hands and feet to perform that direction; knowledge alone is as the eyes without feet and hands: and practice without a solid knowledge, is as strong legs and nimble hands in a blind man: light and life

are

are best together; if naked knowledge be sufficient, then the Devill is a most perfect creature, who hath one *name* from the greatness of his knowledg: all men in the world do come short of him in the knowledge of good and evill, he knoweth good, but not to love and seek it; he knoweth evill; but not to hate and flee from it; his actions and affections are set close unto his knowledge, (as Devils are called *understanding spirits*, so also they are stiled *spiritual wickednesse*) his serpentine subtilty hath purchased him the name of an *intelligent spirit*, but his wickednesse, calls him *Sathan*, an enemy to God. It is said of the *Cherubins*, that there were *hands under their wings*. The word *Cherubin* signifies light, intimating, where there is the light of knowledge, there should be hands to put that light into practice. The Egyptians in their Hieroglyphicks painted a tongue, and an hand under it, to shew that knowledge and speech is good, when that which is known and spoken, is put in practice. *If you know these things* (sayes our Saviour) *happy are you if you do them*, *It is nothing for one to have the Trumpet at his lips*, (as *Gideons* souldiers) *who hath not the Torch in his hand*, saith a Father; the voyce of *Athanasius* was a *thunder-clap*, and his life a *lightning flash*, saith he; because words never thunder well, if examples enlighten not. True wisdom is a prudence of works, not of words,

Δαμῶν.

Eph. 6. 12.

Ezek. 1. 8.

John 13.
17.

Greg. Naz.

Jam. 4. 17.

Grave est
peccatum
non sciuisse
quod faci-
as, gravius
non fecisse
quod scias.
Ambr. de
offic. lib. 2.
20.

Frustrā est
potentia
que nun-
quam pro-
ducitur
in actum.
Scientia
contempla-
tiva &
practica,
contempla-
tiva que
docet res
sibi subje-
ctas scire

tantum, & contemplari; cuius finis est ipsa cognitio, & hac sufficit in Me-
taphysicis, Physicis, & Mathematicis: altera practica, seu activa dici-
tur, que non solum docet scire, sed agere & operari aliquid eorum, que
cognoscimus; huius finis est actio, & hac requiritur in disciplinis, Ethicis
Oeconomicis, Politicis. Per. er. Physic. lib. 1. cap. 5. & August. 83.
Quest.

words, saith Cyprian. He that knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is sin. It is a great sin not to know what thou doest, a greater not to do what thou knowest, saith Ambrose, for as one saith at the last day, we shall not be demanded; *Quid legimus sed quid egimus, nec modo quid diximus, sed quomodo viximus; what we have read, but what we have done; nor so much what we have spoken, as how we have lived.* Bernard. Knowledge and practice must go together; for else, as the saying is true amongst the Philosophers, that power is to none effect, which is never produced into act. So it is as true in Divinity, that it is a vain and idle intention, that is never put in execution. The end of knowing Gods will, is to do it. There is say the Philosophers, contemplative and practical knowledge, contemplative or speculative is that which teacheth a man to understand things in their own nature, and only to contemplate, whose end is bare knowledge; and this is sufficient in Metaphysicks, Physicks, and Mathematicks: Practical or active knowledge, is that which not only teacheth a man to know, but to do the things which he knowes: the end of

this

this knowledge is action, and this is required in *Disciplines, Ethicks, Oeconomicks, Politicks,* and Religion consisteth not in a bare naked profession, but in action and practice; all the bells of *Aarons* garments ring out a loud peal of practice, and it is the common tenent of all the Fathers, that Religion consisteth not so much in the fine faire leaves of knowledge, profession, and good words; as in the sound and savoury fruits of practice and good works. Yea, even some of the *Heathen* have taught this truth: for *Aristotle* affirmeth that felicity or happinesse consisteth not in the Theory or Knowledge, but in the practice of vertue: a man that hath knowledge without practice, is like a man that carrieth a *Lanthorn* behind him, to give light to others, but breaks his own shins, or like *Noahs* Carpenters, that made an Ark to save others, but were drowned themselves. *Lyra* observeth, that as that *Physick* is vain that doth not purge the bad humours, and procure the health of the body, so that knowledg is no better that makes no amendment upon the soule. *Aristotle* in his *Ethicks* saith, that such as content themselves with the naked knowledge of moral vertue, and go no farther, caring not to practice it, are not unlike to such, as consult with, and ask the advice of Physicians concerning their bodily diseases, but care not for having them administer or apply any thiug to them to cure or recover them; and

Lyraglos.
in *Jac.* 4.

22.

John 14.

21.

Qui habet:

in memoria,

qui servat

in vita; qui

Sermoni-

bus, qui

servat in

moribus;

qui habet

audiendo,
qui sonat

quijervat
*aciando

Анализ

75. in Io.

han.

1994

and therefore no marvell though the one retain unsound, unheathy bodies, notwithstanding they know their diseases; and the other have the corruptions and maladies of their minds and souls remaining, though they have been discovered to them: to put in practice what we know of Christ, is one great evidence of our love to him. *He that*

bath my Commandements, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, saith our Saviour; upon which words one of the Ancients hath this meditation, he that hath them in his memory, and keepeth them in his life, which hath them in his speeches, and keepeth them in his manners, which hath them by hearing, which keepeth by doing them; how justly then are they here to be censured, that think Religion to be nothing else but matter of speculation and discourse, and that there is little else required of a Christian then an ear and a tongue? of such Parisiensis complained in

his time, when he said that many men were *Solis auribus Christiani*; let me tell you, a we must have ears to hear, heads to understand, hearts to believe, and tongues to confesse, so we must have hands to practise else we shall but deceive the world with vain shew of of profession, and deceive ourselves without hope of salvation; it is not the knowers and the hearers of the Law, but the doers of the Law shall be justified; It is no

every one that sayes to Christ, Lord, Lord, and shall
 be *formation not y^e cause of our* *scrap*

The work, y
Consequent
of this & the
Genuin
y therefore ca
not be supposed
to be wanting
& yett the
work and
Jam. 1. 21
But y. con
appeared
Salvat

scrape acquaintance with him that shall enter into heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven, saith our Saviour, &c. And if to know and do the will of God, be the way to true happinesse, this then confutes the dreams and conceits of the ancient Philosophers, being much troubled about this mattter, scarce two sects concurring in opinion; it also sets down a speedy course, and short cut to find out what we all seek, though in a different and diverse sort: and of most men *Seneca* saith truly, that it fareth with men in this pursuit, as it doth with men going to Physick, who oftentimes seek, and pay dear for that which doth them but little good; whereas it is at home growing in their gardens, that would cure them, if they knew but the vertue of it, and how to apply it: so (saith he) many men weary themselves in seeking felicity without themselves, whereas that that must lead them to happinesse, is within themselves; so I say true happinesse consisteth not in any outward thing, but in the knowledge and practice of Gods will, upon which consideration *Austine* hath this meditation, *The Kingdome of heaven* (saith he) is set to sale, stand thou not upon the price of it, it is worth much more then thou shalt pay for it, give but thy self for it, and thou shalt have it. — But thou wilt say, thou art not good enough for it; and being evill, it will not receive thee: he tells thee further how to help that, by giving

*Psal. 7.21,
22.*

ving thy self to it, thou shalt become both better to thy self, and fitter for it: if thou demand farther how thou shalt give thy self to it; I answer, by putting thy self to School to *Jesus Christ*, and learning, and taking forth this one Lesson of knowledge, and doing the will of God.

Object.

But it may be objected, that our Saviour Christ making none capable of blessednesse, but such as know and do the will of God revealed, seems to speak of a matter only in imagination, & such a thing as indeed never was, nor ever shall be, for we cannot attain perfect knowledge, much lesse perform perfect obedience in this life, for the Apostle

1 Cor. 13.
9.
Luke 17.
10.

Paul saith, Here we know but in part, and our Saviour himself saith to his disciples, say ye when you have done all these things which are commanded you, We are unprofitable servants.

Resp.

God that made us knowes whereof we are made, and therefore requires of us no more then he will enable us to perform in this frail condition; *Aquinas saith truly, Gods precepts are imperfectly fulfilled in this life, perfectly only in heaven; and of this imperfect obedience, God in mercy accepteth, dealing with his children, as Augustus Cæsar was wont to do with his young souldiers, commending their service not only when they performed what they should, but also when they endeavoured what they could: so Bernard tells us, God reputes that*

*Præcepta
Dei imperfectè tantum im-
plentur in
viâ, perfectè
non
nisi in pa-
tria.
Aquinas.*

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that for being done, which man truly willed to do, but was not able to perform: and now under the Gospel, God measureth mens actions, not by the thing done, but by the mind of the doer; yea, the Lord is so well pleased with our willingnesse of doing his will upon the knowledge of it revealed unto us, that it pleaseth him sometimes to accept and account that as done, which indeed never was done: as appeareth, *Heb. 11. 17.* where it is said, that *Abraham offered up Isaac*, whereas the plain Text, *Gen. 22. 12.* assureth us that he offered him not: *obtulit voluntate non re.* Gorran. *obtulit i. e. offerre voluit;* He offered him, that is, he was willing to have offered him; *nisi divinitus impeditus & prohibitus esset;* unlesse he had been hindered and forbidden by God: and therefore the Lord accounted it as done, and the Spirit of God guiding the hand of the Apostle, in writing this Epistle, bids him set it down as done; and where there is but a little done with a willing mind, he accepteth according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not; therefore the poor Widow that cast in but two mites into the Treasury, is said by our Saviour to cast in more than the Rich men that cast in their gifts out of their abundance: they cast in out of their great plenty, and she out of her penury had cast in all the living that she had: this little of hers, is not Arithmetically, but Geometrically more,

Illud pro facto reputat deus, quod homo quidem verè voluit, sed non valuit adimplere.
Bern.

Lyræ.

2 Cor. 8. 11, 12.

Luk. 2. 11, 2, 3.

not

not simply in respect of the gift, but comparatively in regard of the mind of the giver; and the acceptance of the receiver, who measureth the mind, not the matter, the quality of the giver, not the quantity of the gift; the Rich men peradventure, out of their ambition, as well as from their abundance, gave much; but she out of her penury for meer devotion and pity, consecrated her little *All* to the service of him from whom she acknowledged her self to have received all that she had, and for whose sake, she shewed her self willing to part with all again, doing it from her *affection*, and not from affectation; *The affection many times imposeth the name on the work*: An example in this kind, we have in *Zachary and Elizabeth*, the Parents of *John Baptist*, of whom it is said, they were both just before God, and walked in all the commandments of God without reproof: not but that God could have reprov'd them in the rigour of his justice; but because they endeavoured to walk in all the Commandments of God blamelesse, the Lord would not, to shew the riches of his mercy, and to encourage others to follow their example: they walkt in them all, they desired no exemption from any, or toleration and dispensation for the breach of any; but so far forth as God enabled them, they endeavoured to keep them all blamelesse, or without reproof. And to this purpose, *Augustin*

Affectus
sape numero
imponit
nomen operi.

Ambros.
Luk. 1. 6.

Incedentes
1. vi-
uentes

Beza.

versantes
Erasmus.

The woman
perfect 4
could sin
but y. c.
man in her
that is in

Therefore it is no more he (viz y. man)
but she dwelling in him (viz y. man)

faith,
peccat
maini
long a
sin ran
puted
fieth c
genera
true
Thus
know
do wh
that i
that k
ould
Hav
hou l
ought
ost:
the ac
ceaver
becau
things
ureth
nd m
may
itty
ey g
eny
nowl
ains
ost, i

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faith, that *peccatores conversi non sunt amplius peccatores*: not that they have not sin remaining in them; for so the best shall have so long as they are in this world, but because sin raigneth not in them, it shall not be imputed to them. Thus the Scripture testifieth of Noah, that *he was a man perfect in his generation*; and of Nathanael, that *he was a true Israelite in whom was found no guile*. Thus you see that it is not enough, that we know what we ought to do, but also that we do what we know. You know the doome that is passed on that Steward, or Servant that *knew his Masters will, and did it not, he should be beaten with many stripes*. Gen. 6. 9.
Joh. 1. 47.
Luk. 12. 47

Having attained Heavenly knowledge, see *Direc. 2.* thou lose it not: it is a precious Jewel, and ought carefully to be kept, and not to be lost: *Keep sound wisdom and discretion*, is *Prov. 3. 21.* the advice of the Wise man; the losse of heavenly knowledge is the greatest losse, because thereby you lose all those excellent things, which the knowledge of God procureth for you. Men that have great parts and much knowledge, and afterwards lose it, may be compared unto those, that are busy to get money, and spend it as fast as they get it, being at the years end, not any the better for all they have gotten: knowledge cannot be gotten without much pains; and therefore let it not be easily lost, it will be your shame to lose that carelessly,

leffely, the obtainment whereof, hath coft
 you dear ; as men that have their eye-fight
 are very careful to preferve it, fo we ought
 as carefully to preferve knowledge, which
 is the eye of the foul. The eye of the body
 is very tender, therefore God hath guarded
 it with lids, which close and open moft
 speedily at the pleafure of a man. So it is
 with the eye of the mind, and therefore we
 fhould much efteem the good that may pre-
 ferve it, and carefully fhun the evil that may
 hurt it. You that are Parents will often
 call upon your children to be good hus-
 bands, and keep together, and not to wafte
 and fquander away what you have given
 them, or fhall leave them ; and you that are
 Chriftians fhould often call upon your fouls,
 to keep good judgement and knowledge,
 and not to lofe it ; And let me tell thee, if
 thou keepeft found wifdom and difcretion,
 it will alfo keep and preferve thee from
 many corporall dangers, and fpiritual
 falls.

Direct. 3. Art thou a man of knowledge? *fee what*
good thou haft gotten by thy knowledge : art
 thou wife ? thou muft be wife for thy felf
 what ever thou knoweft, thou muft labour to
 know it for thy good, as *Eliphaz* fpeakes
Job 5. ult. A wife man will labour to know the
goodneffe of every thing : The eye of the
 body can fee any thing but it felf ; but it is
 the glory of heavenly knowledge (which

the eye and beauty of the soul) that it sees
 it self by an admirable reflection upon it
 self: Thus thou shouldest be often thinking
 with thy self, God hath opened the eyes of
 my understanding, he hath *skined into my*
heart, giving me the light of the knowledge of
the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ;
 he hath given me a more piercing head, a
 more sublime speculation, a deeper insight
 and penetration into divine Mysteries, than
 to many others: Oh! what am I the better
 for it? do I find my heart more lifted up-
 wards, my affections more raised from the
 earth, and set on heavenly things? It is a
 spice of *Atheisme*, to look at any thing as
 good in its own nature, and not to extract
 some good out of it, and get some good by
 it. How few men do worship God as they
 know him? they can say that God is good,
 and yet never love nor seek him; that he is
 just and powerful, yet fear not to offend
 him; that he is wise, yet submit they not
 to his wisdom; that he is omniscient, and
 yet they breed, and feed wicked thoughts
 in their hearts: they believe there is an hell
 for sin and sinners, and yet go on in the way
 of sin: and that there is laid up a Crown
 of glory in Heaven for well-doing, and yet
 they follow the multitude to do evil: such
 knowledg as this, is no better than Atheism,
 and Infidelity. That is the best knowledge

M

that

that reduceth all duties, promises, and threatnings, to our persons, joying affection to light, and moving the heart according to things known, and out of all, draweth actions that serve to expresse that knowledge, doing all as in the presence of the glorious Sun of Righteousnesse: where this care is, sin findeth a *bridle*, and grace a *spur*. They who walk in this light, enjoy the unspeakable fruits thereof, whilest others are as void of them, as they are strangers to the light it self.

Direct^o 4.

2 Cor. 8.7
Col. 1.9.

Labour to grow in knowledge, according to the advice of the Apostle, 2 Pet. 3. 18. do not shew your selves children, by thinking you know enough already; for he that thinks he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing as he ought to know: *Brethren, be not children in understanding, but in understanding be men*, 1 Cor. 14. 20. the Apostle commendeth the *Corinthians* for abounding in knowledge; and gives thanks for the *Colossians* upon the like account. *Solon* was wont to say, I grow old, alwayes learning many things. It is written of *David Chytreus* a *German Divine*, when he was even upon the point of death, that he raised up himself upon his pillow, as well as he was able, to hear the discourses of his godly friends that sate by him, and said, that he should die the more comfortably, if he might die learning something. There

is

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none so cunning in Christs School, but may learn more: even *David* a prime Scholler, of the highest form, desireth to be further informed, *Lord teach me thy wayes*, Ps. 86. 11.

And so *Solomon* his son, though he were the wisest King amongst men, and the wisest man amongst Kings, yet he prayeth to God for *a wise and an understanding*

heart, that he might discern between good and bad. *David* was no Novice in Christs

school, or mean Proficient in the study or practise of Piety, he was surely a man of

much knowledge, and had many excellent natural parts, which doubtlesse he augment-

ed by art being added unto them, and improved both by many years study and in-

dustry; nay (which was more) he was doubtlesse, endowed with a great measure

of grace from above; for he confesseth and thankfully acknowledgeth that he had *more*

understanding than his teachers, and out-strip-
ped all the Ancients, Psal. 119. 99, 100. yet

even he, thus excellently qualified by nature and art, yea even as it were perfected by

grace, still prayeth for *direction and instruction* in the wayes of God, Psal. 119. 27, 33, 34,

35, 36, 64, 66, 73. That we can attain to
perfection of knowledge here in this life,

many places might easily be produced plain-
to prove it to us: 1 Cor. 13. 9. *We know*

in part, and prophesie in part, and verse 12.

1 Kings 3.

9.

2 Pet 3. 19

Theologia
sive scien-
tia & in-
telligentia
viatorum
inchoata
tantum &
modificata
dicitur, que-
niam homi-
nibus per
modum &
mensuram
datur.
Polan.
Synr.

Now we see through a glasse darkly, as old men see through spectacles: and Bernard saith, that here we see *per angusta foramina*, through narrow auger-holes, & *non per aperta ostia*, and not through opened doors. Peter tells us plainly, that his beloved brother Paul, had written to the Jewes, according to the wisdom given unto him: Let us get as much knowledge as we can, we may say as Job doth, Lo these are parts of his wayes, but how little a portion is heard of him, and the thunder of his power, who can understand? Job 26. 14. Therefore labour to be filled with the knowledge of God: It is said of our Saviour Christ, that he was filled with wisdom, Luk. 2. 40. and the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, and was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was with him: as he grew in age; so he increased in understanding, and the other gifts of the mind. If any shall say he was wisdom it self Joh. 1. 14. and Col. 3. and how then could he be said to increase in wisdom and knowledge?

I answer, There was in him, a double wisdom: *vid.* his uncreated wisdom, *quatenus deus*, as God; and his infused wisdom *quatenus homo*, as man: Now to the first there could be no addition, or augmentation, he being even perfect wisdom it self but in regard of the second, he increased, *sapientiâ, & naturali, & acquisitâ, in natu*

ral and acquired wisdom: in natural wisdom, the organs of his body growing apt to exercise it, and expresse it, and in acquired wisdom, getting daily by observation, more experience of things, and it is most certain, as man he was in his infancy ignorant as other children are, and grew in knowledge, in the same manner they do, though in an extraordinary measure; the more therefore you encrease in knowledge, the more you are like to Christ, the store-house of wisdom and knowledg. It was prophesied by Daniel concerning the latter days, that *many shall run* Dan. 12. 4. *to an l fro, and knowledge shall be encreased.*

See that you communicate your knowledge Direct. 5. *unto others*: "The ends of men that desire knowledge, and use means to obtain it are divers, saith one. Some desire knowledge only, that they may know, which is curiosity, some desire knowled, that that they may be known, which is pride and vanity: Some o ly to make an advantage of their knowledg, which is covetousnesse: Some a gain to edifie themselves, and to communicate their knowledg, and to do good to others, and this is true wisdom. Bernard. No man when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick; that they which come in, may see the light; the maning is, whomsoever God hath enlightened with knowledge, he must

Luke 11.
33.

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1 Cor. 12.
7.

not make a Monopoly of it, by concealing and keeping it only to himself, but impart it to the use and benefit of others: thus Paul tells us, that *the manifestation of the spirit, is given to every one to profit withall.* The Sun and Moon, and Starres, as they are the greatest lights in themselves, so they shine not for themselves, but for the benefit of the whole world; *on whom doth not his light arise.* Job 25. many men do bear the generall knowledge of God lockt up in their breasts, as sealed bags of treasures, that be neither told nor opened, of little or no use at all. As a candle is *luminis sui diffusivum & communicativum omnibus in domo*, communicative of its light to all that are in the house; so we ought to communicate our knowledge to all with whom we have to do: some there are whom worldly profits do keep from this duty, these do put this light *under a bushell*, others are hindred by pleasure and vanity, and these put it *under a bed*, and both are very dangerous: Take heed of smothering your gifts, and burying your talents with the unprofitable servant. Plato the Philosopher tells us, that *no man is born for himself*, and surely such as retire themselves to *Monkish* Eremitical and Anchorites lives, altogether regarding only themselves, are reproved of the bruit creatures, for Beasts, Birds, and Bees, labour

Marth. 25.
13.24.

not

not for themselves alone : we find in Scripture , this holy disposition in all true converts, to teach and instruct others in the ways of godlinesse : when *Andrew* had found Christ, he was restless till he had called *Simon*, neither could *Philip* forbear , till he had brought in *Nathanael* : when the woman of *Samaria* was instructed by Christ, she runs in to the City, and calleth her neighbours: when Christ had called *Matthew*, he invited Christ to his house , and made him a great Feast; and there were (saith the Text) a great company of Publicans and others : it is not to be imagined, that they came into his house without his leave, or that *Matthew* invited them with any other intent , then that they might get that good by Christ, which his soul had already reaped. Some allegorize here-upon, and say, that it was a great Feast indeed, because the Feast-maker himself was here served in, and laboured to bring others unto Christ : now with the very reversion of this Feast , not only the needy on earth, but the very Angels in heaven were made merry. But I dare not strain it thus farre with *Stella*. It was a great Feast saith *Calvin*, not so much for the multitude of guests , as for the variety of cheer which doubtlesse he being of ability would provide to manifest his love and duty by way of thankfulness to Christ, that had entertained him into his

Lukc 5 29.
Lukc 15.7.

M 4

service,

Psal. 34.

I. 3.

Cant. I. 3.

Isa. 2. 3.

Zech. 8. 21

Joh. 7. 38.

Psal. 66. 16

service; as the manner is of servants inviting their Masters, & to this Feast he inviteth many of his old companions, labouring to draw them also unto Christ. So *David* first professeth that he will praise the Lord himself saying; *I will alwayes give thanks unto the Lord, his praise shall be in my mouth continually*, and then presently he addeth, *praise ye the Lord with me, let us magnify his name together*. So the Spouse in the *Canticles*, promiseth that if Christ would draw her, she would procure company to go with her. True Christians are not like *Rayles*; but like *Partriges*, that fly in companies together. This was prophesied that it should be the disposition of those that should be brought in by the Gospel into the Christian Church; one should provoke and call upon another; *come & let us go up to the mountain of the Lord: and they that dwell in one City, shall go to another, saying; up, let us go and pray before the Lord of Hosts*. These are the rivers of water, that flow out from the belly of a true believer. *Come ye: hearken to me, saith David, and I will tell you what God hath done for my soule*. Therefore let everyone that hath knowledg, communicate it to others, labour thou according to thy calling, & according to the measure of knowledg which thou hast received, to work upon others by advice, and counsel, by entreaty and perswasion, to bring them to the

the saving knowledge of God, and his ways.
 Art thou a Magistrate, thou must labour to
 reclaim men from the works of darknesse.
 Art thou a Minister, thou must *feed the flock*,
 taking the oversight thereof, thou must *feed*
them with the bread of knowledg, and of under-
standing? thou must make it thy work to
 winne soules, and to turn the people from
 the wayes of folly and ignorance: Art thou
 a husband, thou must dwell with thy wife
 as a man of knowledge? husbands must in-
 struct their wives with the knowledge of
 God. Art thou a Master of a family; thou
 art to instruct thy children and servants at
 home, and bring them out to wisdomes gates,
 to Gods Ordinaunces abroad, that so, if it
 may be, thou mayest *bring them to the know-*
ledge of God, that they may be saved. The
 Apostle exhorts Parents to bring up their
 children *in the nurture and admonition of*
the Lord. *Fathers, provoke not your chil-*
dren too much by tyrannizing over them,
 and immoderately exercising your au-
 thority over them; (using all correction and
 no instruction) being silent in words, yet be-
 ing more sharp and severe many times then
 there is just cause, whereby the discipline is
 spoyled: but bring them up in the instru-
 ction and admonition of the Lord: teach
 them how to carry themselves towards God
 in the duties of his service, and in civility,
 and

1 Pet 5. 1, 2

Eph. 6. 4.

*Inutilis est
 animadver-
 sio, ubi si-
 lent verba,
 & servant
 verbera.*
 Marlorar.

and courtesie towards men in the common affaires and dealings of the world, so shall they keep a good conscience before God, and get themselves credit before men. Now as Parents must not use too much severity and austerity, so neither must they use too much lenity, whereupon as many mischiefs, and inconveniences ensue, as upon the former: for as it is said of the Ape, that she having but two young ones, kills one of them with over-much kindnesse; so some fond and foolish parents, if they do not kill, yet they spill their children by too much cockering them, whereof we have an example in old *Eli* towards his sonnes, and in *David*, who was to blame too, both towards *Adonijah*, and *Absalom*. He that desireth a good crop of corn, must not only sow good seed, but also weed it, and use other good husbandry about it; and he that desireth his son may prove a good man, and a profitable member in the Church and Commonwealth, must procure him a good Tutour, and must himself be continually dropping good and wholesome instructions, and directions upon him; for the soul of a child is, as *Aristotle* saith, *tanquam abrasa tabula*, as a smooth table, or like a piece of wax, apt and fit for any impression: Thus have the godly done from time to time; and so it seemeth *Adam* instructed his sonnes concerning the worship

1 Sam. 2.

23, 24, 25.

1 Reg. 1. 6.

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worship of God, else what should move them to offer sacrifice. *Genes. 4.* Thus did *Abraham*, God himself giving this testimony of him: *I know Abraham, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do judgement and justice, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham, that which he hath spoken of him:* thus also *Isaack*, *Jacob*, and the rest of the godly *Patriarchs*, and we may very well suppose, that they would never have suffered themselves to be circumcised, had they not been formerly instructed in the law of the Lord, and made acquainted, that it was the Lords will and pleasure: So *Joshua*, *I and my house*, saith he, *will serve the Lord.* *Solomon* was taught by his *Father David.* *Prov. 4. 4.* and by his *Mother, Prov. 31.* *Timothies* Faith was derived from his *Grand-mother and Mother*; and it is said of him, that *from a child he knew the holy Scriptures.* Every Master of a Family hath charge over the soules of his children and servants, this God commanded the old *Israelites*: these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and shalt talk of them, when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up: thus doth *King David* charge his sonne *Solomon*, telling

Gen. 18. 19

2 Tim. 1. 5.

2 Tim. 3.

15.

Deut. 6.

6. 7.

1 Reg. 2. 2.

Josephus
saith that
the chil-
dren of the
Jews knew
how many
letters
were in
the Old
Testa-
ment, and
that they
could re-
cite them
as readily
as their
owne
names.
Joseph. lib.
2. cont.
Appian.
Chrysost.
Homil. de
Anna, &
Samueli
educationi.

ling him, that he was going the way of all
flesh; take heed to the charge of the Lord
thy God, and walk in his wayes, and keep
his Statutes, and Commandements, and
Judgements, and Testimonies, pressing him
with many words of the same significati-
on, that he might the rather remember
the substance of his charge, he addeth a
reason, that thou mayest prosper in all thou
doest, and in every thing whereunto thou turn-
est thee, and 1 Chron. 28. 9. And thou So-
lomon my Sonne, know thou the God of thy Fa-
thers, and serve him with a perfect heart,
and a willing mind: in both which places,
he first gives him charge of the service of
God, before any matter of his Kingdome.
Philo the Jew reporteth to the commenda-
tion of the Jewes, that they were *libero-
rum cultores & cultrices*, and it is Chry-
sostomes simile, that as men will patch up their
own buildings, and piece up ruinous and rot-
ten houses; so they should be more carefull of
the Lords house: and if he punish the neglect of
repairing his materiall Temple, then will he
be more offended and displeased for the neg-
lect of his spiritual, as our selves and our
children be. 1 Cor. 6. 19.

How justly then are those carelesse Pa-
rents to be reprov'd, who as if their chil-
dren consisted altogether of body, and had
no soules, take care onely to scratch and
scrape

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scrape a little goods together for them, but never care for having them taught how to use it: *Austin* confesseth, that his Father was not much better; for thus he saith of him, that he spared no cost that he might be learned, but he cared not much, though he were lewd and wicked.

*Dum esset desertus, non curabat, licet esset Dei cultura de-
serius.
Aug. lib. 2. confess.
cap. 3.
Majori sol-
licitudine
me partu-
riebat Spi-
ritu, quam
peperat car-
ne, parturi-
vit carne,
ut in hanc
temporalem
nascerer,
corde, ut in
aeternam
lucem re-
nascerer.
August.*

But for *Monica* his mother, in whose heart he saith, the Lord had begun to build his Temple, she ceased not to do her uttermost endeavours every way, that he might be truly religious, and as well Gods child by grace, as hers by nature: And surely where this duty is neglected, children neither know their duty towards God, their Parents, or any body else: as appeareth in the History of a certain 'old
' man of *Athens*, that came before *Solon* a
' Judge at that time, and in that place,
' where he lived, and complained that his
' son was undutiful and disobedient, which
' he knowing to be a foul fault, caused the
' young fellow to be called in, to see what
' he could say for himself, and my Author
' saith, he was not able to deny it; where-
' upon he decreed, that because he had shew-
' ed no duty while he lived, therefore he
' should enjoy nothing by his Father when
' he died; and so deprived the young man
' of his inheritance for his disobedience:
' sentence being past, the young man an-
' swered for himself, that howbeit, he could

'not

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' not altogether deny the fact, yet it, was
 ' not altogether his fault; but partly his
 ' Fathers, because he never afforded him
 ' any education, instruction, or good bring-
 ' ing up, whereby he might learn to do his
 ' duty, either to him or others; which be-
 ' ing likewise affirmed by the Son, and not
 ' disproved by the Father, he punished him
 ' also, and deprived him of the solemnity
 ' of his Funeral.

It is not enough for Parents, to excuse
 themselves from this work of instructing
 their children, saying they will do it here-
 after; but they must take the soonest time
 they have opportunity. We know, it is a
 practise among Husbandmen and Gardeners,
 to set and sow, both trees, plants, and seeds,
 in the spring of the year; so we are to sow
 the seed of the true knowledge of God and
 of Religion, in children, in the spring of
 their age. *Teach a child in the trade of his
 way, and when he is old, he will not depart from
 it.* Prov. 22. 6. That a child is capable of
 instruction, may appear, in that he is apt to
 learn rude rhymes, immodest songs, dances,
 and the like, as children are capable to mock
 and scoffe; as the children that mockt
Elisha, so also to cry *Hosannah*, as those did
 to Christ, *Matb.* 21. 15. and though chil-
 dren do not so readily encline to good, as to
 evil, yet childhood is not so corrupt as a
 riper

*Quo semel
 est imbuta
 recens ser-
 vabit odo-
 rem Testa-
 din--*

2 Reg. 2.

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riper age : and for any man to say , it is not good to set an old mans head upon a young pair of shoulders, I say that it is never too soon to learn good things ; they that neglect it, when they be young, are uncertain where they shall live to learn being old ; therefore it is good to make use of the present time : In the morning sow thy seed. Eccles. 11. Remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, Eccles. 12. 1.

1. It will be easie and familiar to them, it is easie for a man to bear the yoke from his youth, for thus by use and custome (which is another nature) *grave jugum*, will become *suave jugum*, as our Saviour tells us, *Math. 11. 29.* Tender twigs are easily bowed, but old trees, sooner break than bend. The Lord commandeth a Parent, not to withhold correction from his child ; for if thou smite him with the rod, he shall not die ; Now if they are to be corrected betimes for vices, then also are they capable of instruction, and ought betimes to be instructed. So God requireth, that they should be taught concerning the Passeeover : It shall come to pass, that when your children shall say unto you, What mean you by this service ? that you shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lords Passeeover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And Exod. 13. 14. It

Eccles. 11.

6.

Lam. 3. 27.

Prov. 23.

13.

Exod. 12.

26, 27.

It shall be, when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand, the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage.

2. All men are to provide for their Families, and he that provideth not for his family, is worse than an Infidel. Now good nurture is as necessary to children, as nourishment; and even as they cannot live without meat, so they cannot do well without the knowledge of God, and his Word, which is *Cibus mentis*, their spiritual food, as Gregory calls it; that Common-wealth neither, cannot well stand, where the good education of children is neglected,

1 Tim. 5.
8.

1. How justly are those Parents to be condemned, that let their children grow old in years, but still be young in knowledge, like *Rehoboam*, and season them not at first with good things, but cocker them, whereby they have as little comfort of them, as *Eli* had of his sons, who were sons of *Belial*, and knew not the Lord, and were destroyed. Negligent Parents onely desire to have children, and then no matter whether they be instructed in the knowledge of God or no, and so good or bad, heirs of heaven or hell: whereas they should desire to have a holy seed, to furnish the Earth with Saints, and Heaven with Citizens: carelesse Parents

rents that onely desire to have children, and no more, are like ill husbands, that cast their corn into the ground, and then never care what becomes of it, whether the birds or beasts spoil it : Such Parents have commonly as little comfort of their children being grown up, as they had little care in bringing them up, in the knowledge of the Lord.

2. How are those Parents also to be re-
proved, that are so far from teaching their
children good things, as they teach them
evil things, either by giving them evil ex-
ample, or by acting, or talking of what evil
they have done with a kind of delight :
for of such it is true, as *Plutarch* saith, *They*
lose their authority of reprovving others, whose
lives are filthy and vitious.

Clitipho in *Terence*, scorns his Fathers
grave counsell, because he was apt now and
then to break out, and discourse of his own
knaveries: for youths are apt to think,
that such men envy that to them, that age
deprives themselves of. Therefore the Ro-
mans would not have a Father and his son
seen in a Bath together; and *Cato* sharply
censured a Senatour for kissing his wife be-
fore his daughter, because onely it might
carry a shew of levity; though no dishonesty;
yet, by circumstance, indecency. What
then shall we say of such Parents, as teach

N

their

Quorum
vita turpis
eis objur-
gandi li-
bertas eri-
pitur.
Plutar.
Turpe est
doctri. cum
culpa re-
darguit ip-
sam.

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their Children as soon as they can speak, to sweare, and to swagger, to dice, dance, and drink, and think these good qualities, for them to be like their Fathers; surely, without the great mercy of God, they traine up their children to the devil; such children will curse their Parents at the last day, and wish that they rather had been the offspring of a Toade, or a Dragon, than the Children of such Parents; then will they cry out for judgement against them.

Let Parents therefore be exhorted to teach their children the principles of Religion, to which no course that I can conceive is more fitting, then catechising, both by the Minister in the congregation publicuely, and themselves privately, that they may be spiritually built in the knowledge of the principles of Religion: having faith the foundation, in the Articles of the Creed; the walls of hope in the Lords Prayer, and the roof of Charity in the ten Commandements; that which *Seneca* saith of reading, is true also of hearing: It is better to hear, understand, and learn of one thing, then to hear many things; and of them to understand, and know little or nothing: therefore was the course and custome of catechising first invented, which hath been an ancient custome in the Church, but little younger then the world,

*Praestat
multum
quam multa
audire.
Seneca.
Mark catechised at
Alexandria, then
Clement,
and after
him Origen.
Vide Catechisme.
Cyril. Hierosol. &
Catecheses
mystagogicas.*

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world, as I have shewed before : this was the practice likewise of the Ancient Fathers in the Primitive Church, to compile & compose Catechismes, or Introductions, containing the summe and substance of Christian Religion. That the Apostles and their associates, did urge those to give some evidence and testimony of their faith, and of their purpose to walk with God in newnesse life, whom they drew out of Judaisme and Gentilisme is apparent. *John Baptist* began, *Matth. 3.* and the rest followed ; And some learned men think that the order of asking questions of the Baptized, *doſt thou believe ? doſt thou renounce ?* is very probable to have been in use in the Apostles time, whereunto that saying of *Peter* gives a good colour; where speaking of Baptisme, he mentioneth the *Answer of a good conscience*, the stipulation of a good conscience, the baptized affirming, that thus and thus he believeth, and thus and thus he engageth. And in the Primitive Church there was a certain form or rank called *Catechumeni*, who were first trained up in the knowledge of the grounds of Faith, before they were bap- tized (they being converted from Gentilisme) the chief of which grounds the Apostle sets down, *Heb. 6. 1.* terming them, the doctrine of Baptismes; because they were the heads, in which they that desired to be numbred among Christi-

Vid. Tract. August. de catechizandis rudibus. Item Tract. de Symb. ad Catechumenos

1 Pet. 3. 21

ans, were instructed before they were baptized. And it is a generall opinion, that the Creed was digested into such a form as seemeth to be an answer to a question. The baptized was demanded, *what dost thou believe?* he answered, *I believe in God the Father, &c.* And divers Divines of later times have compiled short Catechismes containing the heads of the Christian Faith; that hereby feeding their people at first with milk, they might fit and prepare them for stronger meat, wherein doubtlesse, they had been well advised, and taken the right course: for to presse deep mysteries of Divinity to an ignorant people not well catechised or instructed in grounds and principles of Religion, were but to build a great frame to an heavie burden upon a weak foundation, which will not bear it — It cannot be denied, but plain and ignorant people, coming to hear a learned and eloquent discourse, may be moved and well affected therewith; but they cannot profit half so well, as if they understood how it were gathered from Gods word, or to what point and head of Divinity, or Christian doctrine, it belonged; and might be referred; as Master *Perkins* proveth in his Epistle before a little Treatise of his called *The six Principles of Christian Religion*: assuredly the learning of short Catechismes and especially the shorter Catechisme

the late Assembly of *Divines* cannot but concerne us all, whether we be learned or ignorant, strong or weak Christians, if we be weak and ignorant, we should hereby be taught and instructed, and hence get knowledge, or otherwise, if we have some competent measure of knowledge already, then hereby we may be occasioned to rub up our memories, and call to mind what formerly we have learned, or at leastwise be called upon to practise what we know already. And if any one shall object the hardnesse of learning good things, let him labour to have the feare Prov. 1.7. of God planted in his heart; *The feare of God is the beginning of knowledge*: and let not the seeming difficulty of obtaining it, hinder thee from using any good meanes to get it: It is said of *Apelles* the painter, that drawing but every day a line, in a short space, he became an exquisite and exact Painter, and surely if wee could every day learn but one line, or but some little short Lesson in Divinity, we should in short time perceive our selves to have made some proficiencie. Thus you see that instructions, and good directions, are very necessary for youths, and young men, of whose *Age*, a witty man in his time said, that it is *incredulous, and and also unexpert, unable,*

*Juvenilis
 atas, in-
 credula,
 simul &
 inexperta
 est, & con-
 temptrix
 alieni con-
 filii, inops
 sui.*
*Petrarc.
 de remed.
 utr. fort.*
 1 Reg. 12.

2 Tim. 2.
 22.

unable to direct it self, and despising the counsels of others; the truth of which assertion is confirmed sufficiently, by that wofull reat, that happened in Israel; when ten of the twelve Tribes revolted from Rehoboam the Sonne of Solomon, because he refused the grave, and wise Counsell of the Ancient Nobles, that had attended on his Father, and harkened to the rash advice of the green-headed youths, brought up with himself, and of his own standing: when young men therefore doe *excedere ex Ephebis*, as the Poet speaks, or be *adulti*, as they say at the Universities, they should remember what *Plutarch* saith in his book *de liberis educandis*, of bringing up of children, that they do not *abjicere imperium*, sed *tantum mutare imperatorem*, i. e. being freed from the *Ferula*, and discharged from subjection to a Tutor, that even they be left to the guidance of their own discretion, whereby they must follow *Pauls* counsell to his Schollar *Timothy*, to fly all youthfull lusts, and labour (being well instructed in the grounds of true Religion) as they grow in yeares, to grow in wisdom and knowledge then shall no man have cause to despise their youth, as the same Apostle speaketh. 1 Tim. 4. 12. But the wisdom of their young yeares shall

be

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be their Crowne and Glory. As Virgil said of Æneas his Sonne, *Sequitur Patrem non passibus æquis*, he followeth his Father not with even and equall steppes, so it may be said of most of the children of faithfull Parents.

Let me presse this upon you that are old; to teach the young; do you not read that the Psalmist speaks often, that the praises of the Lord should be declared from generation to generation. Psal. 22. 31. Psal. 79. 13. And so the very Heathen understood that it was the duty of the old to teach the young.

*Jura senes norint, & quid liceátque nefas-
que,
Fúsque sit inquirant, legémque ex anima
servant. Ovid.*

*Præcipere
mitem con-
venit pue-
rís senem.
Seneca.*

Old men are, or should be very knowing, it belongeth to them to teach, and to youth to learne of them: this is chiefly to be observed among Christians! hence it appeareth, how grossely old men sinne, if they who ought to informe others, do themselves know little or nothing of those things that appertain to everlasting salvation, and if they have neglected the meanes of knowledge, and in their old age are so rude and ignorant,

that they had need to bee taught by children the heads of Catechisme (which sometime happeneth :) what will they be able to answer to the righteous Judge of all the world, when he shall aske them, how they have done their duty upon the earth.

Let every christian now be conscientious in this duty, to exhort and instruct one another, to edify one another and provoke to love and to good works, to stirre up one another to the wayes and work of godlinesse.

And to move you all hereunto, I desire you to consider.

1. The great benefit that will come to such as truly performe this duty, the Lord hath made a gracious promise to *Jer. 23. 22.* it; if we stand in his counsell, and cause his people to heare his words, i. e. if we faithfully instruct them in the knowledge and feare of the Lord, then we shall turne them from their evill way, and from the evill of their doings.

Happy is that man that can turne a sinner from evill wayes, and evill doings, to the wayes of godlinesse.

This is the Reason why the Apostle will not have the believing husband, or wife, to separate one from another, because

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because by dwelling together, they may instruct and do good one to another: for *1 Cor. 7. 16.*
what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?

2. If thou canst winne but one soule to Christ, thou shalt bring much glory *Isa. a. 18.* to God. Solomon saith, that *in the multitude of people is the Kings honour*; So herein is the great King of heaven honoured, when many people shall go and say, *Come ye, and let us goe up to the mountaine of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his wayes, and we will walke in his pathes: he that converteth a sinner, shall save a soule from death, and cover a multitude of sins.* *Jac. 5. 20.*

3. It will bring in great peace and comfort to your own soules: what greater comfort in the world, then to see those that sate in darknesse, to have the eyes of their understandings opened? to see those that were dead, translated from death to life; to be new borne, to be converted unto God? Oh what abundance of comfort will this consideration work upon thy heart. However, let Ministers do their duty, Parents their duty,

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Ezek. 2. 5.

Isa. 49 4. 5.

2 Cor. 2.

14. 15.

Heb. 3. 13.

*Per hoc
nil aliud
est scientia
nostra,
quam cul-
pa.*

Salvian.

duty, Husbands their duty, Christians their duty in their respective places, and then let the successe be what it will, we shall have comfort therein. Ezek. 2. God commands the Prophet to speak to the people, *whether they would hear, or whether they would forbear*; and thus saith the Prophet *Isaiah*: *though I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought, yet surely my judgement is with the Lord, and my work, or my reward with my God*; though *Israel* be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength. Thanks be to God, saith Paul, which alwayes causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest by us the savour of his knowledge in every place: for we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. Therefore exhort one another daily, while it is called to day. Do not think it a duty onely belonging to the Minister, to instruct and stir up others in the wayes of Religion; it is his duty principally, but it is thy duty also. Do not say with wicked *Cain*; *Am I my brothers Keeper*? If thou seest thy neighbour lying in the pit of ignorance, and thou hast that which might help him out, and doest it not, thou art guilty

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guilty of his perishing, by this our knowledge is no thing else but a fault, saith Salvian. Labour with all thy might to help thy Wife, and Children, Servants, and friends, and neighbours, out of this dark dungeon.

Hath God enlightened you with saving knowledge? *See that you walk as children of the light:* If a man have never so much knowledge, if he walk not answerable to it, it is but a glow-worm light: if thy head be full of light, and thy workes be full of darknesse, it is an evidence that *the light that is in thee is no better than darknesse. The night is farre spent, saith the Apostle, the day is at hand, let us therefore cast off the workes of darknesse, and let us put on the Armour of light.* Pareus by night understandeth our estate of ignorance and blindnesse, before our effectual calling, and conversion; and by day our estate of illumination and grace, after our conversion: *Let us therefore, saith the Apostle, cast off the workes of darknesse.*

Direc. 7
Eph. 5. 8.

Rom. 13.

12.

Pareus in
loc.

Sin may be called workes of darknesse.

1. Because (for the most part) they proceed from the ignorance of Gods will,

will, not revealed to such as are yet unconverted. Thus Paul saith, That the Gentiles walked in the vanities of their minde, having their understandings darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that was in them: and did men know the dangers that follow sinners, they would be more wary of their wayes; yea doubtlesse we may say, when we see men run headlong into sin, that either they see not what they do, which is pitiful, or else that they wilfully winke and will not see, which is much more perilous.

2. Sins may be called workes of darknesse, because they be (for the most part) done in the darke, and the doers of them still delight to be in the dark, and are ashamed that their doings should be brought to light: for what Job saith
 Eph. 4.18. *ed, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that was in them:*
 Job 24.15. *of one sinner, saying, The eye of the Adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, No eye shall see me, and disguiseth his face. Our Saviour affirmeth to be true of all sin, and every sinner, saying, that every one that doth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, least his deeds should be reprov'd: or,*
 Joh. 3.20.

3. Because

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3. Because they are evermore suggested to us, either by *Satan* himself, the *Mint-master* of all mischief, the *Prince of darknesse*, or by some of his wicked instruments, that be *Amici Curie*, *Proctours*, *Factours*, and *sollicitours* of that black *Prince*, in his *Court of darknesse*.

4. Because they carry those that live and die in them, into Hell, the place of utter darknesse: Let us then that are enlightned with the true light, cast off the workes of darknesse, and put on the armour of light; that is, have our conversation suitable to our profession. The *Gospel* is the *day*, *Christ* is the *light*, Luther, *Faith* is the *eye* which apprehendeth this in *Rom.* light; therefore seeing the day is come, and the light shineth, let us walk as in the day, and in the light; the eye of faith, and the foot of obedience (which two concurring, make an holy life) are called *armour of light*: they be called *armour*, because thereby we may defend our selves from the fiery Eph. 6. 16. *darts of the devil*: and they be called *armour of light*, for three causes.

1. Because they proceed from the *Father of lights*, James 1. 17.

2. Be-

2. Because they make them that wear this armour, *shine like lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation*, Phil. 2. 15.

3. Because like true bred Eagles, they abide the light, and need neither care nor fear, who looks upon them; as our Saviour telleth us; *He that doth the truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God: viz. according to his will revealed in his Word.*

Joh. 3. 21.

1. Get in a lightsome principle therefore into your hearts, look that the light that is in you be not darknesse; do not act by mens courses, and by precedents from others; but get a principle of light within to guide thee in all thy actions.

2. Let all thy aimes also be full of light, labour in all your actions to approve your selves to God; and above all things aim at his glory. To have low, ignoble and base endes, is not to act as a childe of light; but to have high, glorious, and supernaturall endes and aimes, to confide in his word, to trust in his mercy, to rest upon his
grace,

grace, to stay upon his power and faithfulness, to adhere to his promises, to sanctifie the Lord in your hearts, to glorifie his Name, to praise him for his goodnesse, to be zealous for his glory, to walke in the light of his countenance, and to have communion with him in all holy ordinances; these are the ends that become the children of light.

3. See that thou walke by a lightsome rule, let the Word of God be your rule, let the Word be a *lampe*, or candle to your feet, and a light unto your paths; all our deviations and aberrations from the light of this bright-shining candle, are dark steps, or steps into darknesse; when men walke by a lightsome rule, their actions are full of light. Psal. 119.
105.

Let us then walke decently, as in the day, abhorring all workes of darknesse: you know discreet men in the night are carelesse of their attire, not regarding what colour, or stuff, or fashion it be, so it keep them warm, because they know that the darknesse covereth both it and them; but in the day time, when they mean to go abroad, or admit any body to see or speake with them, they will be ashamed, unlesse they

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they be in some good fashion, like men of their place and ranke, and therefore will have their apparel becomming men of their qualities and conditions. So let knowing Christians walke as becom-
 ing Saints, and avoid whatsoever is of evill report: *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good workes, and glorifie your heavenly Father,* saith our blessed Saviour.

Math. 5.
16.

Use. 4.

Let me adde a use of caution:

1. Art thou a man enlightned with the knowledge of God? take heed how thou sinnest against the light of knowledge which God hath set up in thee to direct thee. Oh the great wickednesse that is in mens hearts in these dayes: the light now shineth more gloriously than it did heretofore, the word is more common, more frequently, and powerfully taught; more and better helps to the attainment of knowledge, than were in former Ages: may not we demand with the Apostle, *Have they not heard? Did not Israel know?* Men are not ignorant, or may not be ignorant, what duty they owe to Gods Sabbaths, what reverence to his Name, what respect to his word; and yet men prophane the Lords day, despise their teachers,

Rom. 10.
18, 19.

teachers, contemne the Word, and sinne against cleare light, and act as if they were ignorant in the mystery of Christ, and to seek in duties appertaining to God and their neighbour: The sinne of such men shall be more heinous, then many others, whom God hath not given to know so much as he hath to them. Make conscience thereof committing sinnes against conscience, and of thwarting those holy rules which the Spirit of God by the preaching of his Word hath written in thy heart: this makes the wayes of God to be evil spoken of, and the seeking after knowledge to be condemned as the cause of all licentiousnesse, when men bring scandal upon Religion, by walking contrary to what they know,

Quo major est revelatio, eo magis est cognitio, & quo magis cognitio peccatum, & quo magis peccatum eo magis iudicium.
Bernard.]

2, Art thou a knowing man, take heed of being proud of thy knowledge. *Scientia inflat, Knowledge puffeth up*, saith the Apostle: men that know much, are apt to know it too much, and those that excell in knowledge, are apt to swell with pride: the best men are apt to be tainted with this infection; Paul himself was subject to be exalted above measure through the abundance of Revelations: take heed of pride of gifts, learning

1 Cor. 8. 1.

2 Cor. 12. 7

O

Wit,

wit, knowledge; for God hath not given us these things, to the end that we should set them a Sun-shining, or to make sale ware of them, but that we may use them to his glory: the finest cloth is soonest stained, and the finest wits are most subject to pride; for as wormes sooner ingender in tender wood, then in knotty, and as mothes breed sooner in fine cloth, than in course flocks, so pride and vain glory do sooner assault a man of excellent parts, and great knowledge: then one of meaner gifts: therefore pride may be said to be indengred of the ashes of all vertues. Ministers, should in a speciall manner take heed of pride; their calling is high, their gifts are or should be great, and they are apt to grow proud of them: and the devill hath great reason to bestirre himself, to puffe them up with their knowledge, for he knoweth;

1. If pride overthrow them, they fall not alone, but like blazing starres, draw taitles after them.

*Errores
magni. Et
magni in-
genium
assuntur.*

2. Because it is a meanes to ingender heresie and schismes, great errors doe never spring up without great wits, and many men who seek not truth,
but

but triumph, will rather then not be
 singular, not be sound. *Omnes doctrine
 impietatis de superbia radice proveniunt.*
August. Man is lighter then vanity, and
 made of the dust, therefore a little
 wind will blow him high enough, and
 though a man have never so much cause
 of abasement, yet knowledge is apt to
 puffe and lift a man up more, then the
 other will cast him down: A man of
 great knowledge should not be like the
 Palm-tree whereof *Pliny* tells us, that *Plin. nat.
 hist. lib. 16.
 cap. 42.*
 the more weight is laid upon it, the
 higher it riseth; but like to the *Canes*
 that are full of Sugar, the fuller they
 are, the lower they stoop; much grace
 and knowledge should not make a man
 more high, but more humble: yet not-
 withstanding there is a spirituall glo-
 rying in the knowledge of God, that
 is lawfull; a spirituall heart hath a
 spirituall glorying in the knowledge of
 the Lord, bred in him by the Spirit
 of God: of this the Prophet *Jeremy* *Jerem. 2.*
 speaks, *Let not the wise man glory in* *73. 24.*
his wisdom, let not the strong man glo-
ry in his strength, let not the rich man
glory in his riches, but let him that glory-
eth, glory in this; that he understandeth
and knoweth me that I am the Lord.
 When a man knoweth the Lord to be
 O 2 his

August. in
Orat. Do-
minic.

his God and portion, and himself to be the Lords, then may he glory in this excellent knowledge, all other glorying is but vain: *Augustine* writing upon the fourth Petition of the Lords Prayer, tells us that the greatest Emperour in the world is, a very begger in regard of God; and we know that beggers must be no braggers, wee are but Stewards, and Stewards must not be stately, we must not say of knowledge, and the rest of our talents, as the Atheists of their tongues, *Psal. 12.* 4. that they *be our own*, and that *wee will use them*, or rather abuse them, *as we list*, what ever any body saith to the contrary: this is a false plea, and a flat *Non-sequitur*, for we are but entrusted with them, and must one day bee accountable for them: wee must not therefore use them at our owne pleasure, but according to our Masters appointment.

2 Pet. 2. 21

3. Is thy spirit the candle of the Lord, dost thou know God and his wayes? then take heed of apostasy and back-sliding: *It is better not to have known the way of righteousness: then after they have knowne to depart from the holy Commandement given unto them.* See that

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that thy goodnesse be not as a morning cloud, or early dew, that soon passeth away. It is not enough for a souldier to have skill to use his weapons, and to make a faire flourish, and gallant *bravado*, and then runne away; but he must double and treble his activity, till he hath foiled his foe, and possessed himselfe of the field: It is not enough for a Saylour to be expert in the Art of Navigation, to weigh his Anchors, hoysse up his Sayles, and go gallantly out, but his skill appeares most in coming safe home againe. So it is not enough to have some knowledge of Christ, and to come to him. *Matth. 4.*

28. But we must abide in him, and his word must abide in us, then we shall be his disciples indeed: In a word, we must work till night in Gods Vineyard, if we will have our penny; for that's not paid in the Morning, but at Even. *John 8.31.*

Matth. 20. 8. He that endureth to the end, shall be saved. Matth. 24. 13. we must be faithfull to the death, if we will have the Crowne of life. Revel. 2.

10. Some enlightened persons are very forward professours at first, but tire at last like the *Asses of Armenia*, that go apace in the morning, but grow dull before noon; recoyling like a bad piece, or *Psal. 70. 57*

Gal. 3.

or deceitfull bow, or like the foolish Galatians, beginning in the spirit, and ending in the flesh.

It must not be with knowing Christians in the profession and practice of Religion, as it was wont to be in the Jewes banquets, to set forth their best wine first, as our Saviour tells us, John 2. 10. whosoever are thus, are no better then hypocrites, and their motion forced and violent, for that is still swift at first, and slow at last. A good Christian is best at last, like the Church of Thyatira, to whose commendation our Saviour Christ saith, that he knew her works, that they were more at the last then at the first: whosoever is not ever good, and best at last, was never truly good. They that have been once enlightened, and have tasted of the gifts of Gods Spirit, if they once fall away, it is impossible, or very difficult, for them to be renewed againe by repentance.

F I N I S.



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49 Mr. Deering & the Author
Garry with B. Cranmer
I find to be Legall professors
for their Discouraging Sin:
and Christians to dispute for
y^e to pursue that which is y^e
foundation of Christianity &
without which the Essence of
y^e Incomprehensible being
must be denied & Refuz^d God
not known nor worshiped
But in his own Image
Let not these Barking monies
obscure your knowledge of y^e
almighty but know him as
he has revealed himself & the
more you know him the more
you will love & honour him
& y^e nearer you will ap-
proach him however.

